Summary Report

What Albertans Are Saying About Our Economic Future

May 1992

Alberta
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

TOWARD TOGETHER

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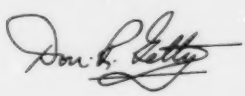
Message from the Premier

Alberta will face many challenges in the decade ahead. The success Albertans achieve in responding to these challenges — economic, social and environmental — will be essential to enhancing the quality of life for current and future generations.

Toward 2000 Together encourages Albertans to share their views, ideas and opinions on the province's future economic direction. We all have a responsibility to ensure that the choices made continue to promote environmentally sound economic growth and diversification. Only through a strong, diversified and sustainable economy will Alberta be able to maintain the quality programs we have come to expect in the areas of education, health, social services and the environment.

On behalf of the Alberta government, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Albertans who took the time to participate in the consultation process. Your contributions and input will be used to help shape Alberta's future economic strategy as we move Toward 2000 Together.



Don R. Getty
Premier

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Foreword

This report has been prepared to provide an overview of the comments Albertans have made in Toward 2000 Together questionnaires, in submissions and briefs, and at Regional Public Forums. Given the overall level of participation, and the quality of responses from Albertans, it is certainly not possible for the report to include verbatim transcripts of all of the comments and submissions received. It is intended instead to present a synopsis of the common issues and themes which have been identified as being important to the province's economic future.

Section I reviews the Toward 2000 Together process, while Section II identifies the issues and themes most frequently raised by Albertans.

Section III presents an analysis of the Toward 2000 Together questionnaire results. Section IV briefly summarizes the presentations given at the six Regional Public Forums, and Section V provides short extracts of additional submissions and briefs which were forwarded to the Alberta government.

A full listing of all the individuals, stakeholder groups and other organizations that made presentations, or provided a written submission or brief, is given in Appendix 'A'.

To obtain additional copies of this report, please call the toll-free Toward 2000 Together information line at **1-800-661-PLAN**. Summaries and verbatim transcripts of the Regional Public Forums are also available upon request.

The Alberta government welcomes your continued input into the Toward 2000 Together initiative. Please forward any comments to:

Hon. Peter Elzinga and
Hon. Rick Orman
c/o Economic Planning Cabinet Committee
Room 324
Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

The Toward 2000 Together Process

The Toward 2000 Together initiative was launched by Premier Don R. Getty on August 29, 1991. The objective has been to obtain broad public input in developing a new economic strategy which will allow Alberta to meet the many challenges, opportunities and risks which lie ahead.

The economic and policy environment has changed significantly since 1984, when the Alberta government last conducted a comprehensive public review of its economic strategy. The strategy which is being developed through Toward 2000 Together is intended to build on the progress already achieved in diversifying the economy and to establish new directions and cooperative approaches for further diversification.

The strategy that results from this extensive public consultation process will have far-reaching implications for Alberta in terms of jobs, economic growth, the province's international competitiveness, the environment, and our quality of life. Clearly, broad public input and discussion of our options and choices are essential to sound decision-making.

As a first step in the Toward 2000 Together process, the Alberta government released a discussion paper setting out the key issues and a number of possible options and choices available to the province. Its purpose was to provide both an opportunity and a vehicle for business, labour, local government, educational institutions and individual Albertans to provide their views and opinions on Alberta's economic future.

Questionnaires and Written Submissions

Included with the discussion paper were a summary document and a brief questionnaire which Albertans were asked to complete. The questions were of a general nature and asked Albertans for their opinions on a range of economic and public policy issues. Albertans were also encouraged to provide their written comments on any economic development and diversification issues they felt were important, or to prepare a separate submission.

Almost 20,000 copies of the Toward 2000 Together information package have been distributed, and the response to date has exceeded original expectations. Over 3,400 questionnaires had been completed by April 28, 1992, with a large number of the respondents also providing written comments. In addition, 223 written submissions and briefs from various stakeholder groups and individual Albertans had been received.

Regional Public Forums

Regional Public Forums were held across the province to provide Albertans with an opportunity to present their views directly to government and to facilitate discussion and the exchange of ideas. The forums were chaired by members of the Economic Planning Cabinet Committee, and the government panels consisted of local or regional MLAs. Participants at the forums included chambers of commerce, local governments, business groups and other stakeholders, as well as individual community members.

To help achieve province-wide participation, forums were held in six communities throughout Alberta.

Regional Public Forums

Location	Dates
Lethbridge	January 17, 1992
Medicine Hat	January 31, 1992
Red Deer	February 14, 1992
Calgary	February 27-28, 1992
Grande Prairie	March 13, 1992
Edmonton	March 26-27, 1992

Approximately 700 Albertans attended the six Regional Public Forums and the media were present at each session. In total, 118 presentations were made.

A number of presentations and written submissions received through the Regional Public Forums summarized the results of workshops held by interested organizations, community groups or other stakeholders to generate input into Toward 2000 Together. Overall, panel members were impressed not only with the level of participation, but by the quality of presentations and submissions received.

Banff Centre for Management Round Tables

The Alberta government also decided to obtain the benefit of expert opinion on a number of key issues facing the province and to explore some innovative approaches in each of these areas. To secure this input through an impartial and independent source, the government contracted The Banff Centre for Management to act at arm's length in holding a series of seven Round Tables across the province.

Banff Centre Round Tables

Topic	Location and Dates
Towards an Innovation-Driven Economy	Fort McMurray November 22-24, 1991
Creative Financing and Delivery of Public Services: Searching for New Opportunities for Public/Private Partnerships	Lethbridge January 17-19, 1992
The Greening of Alberta Business: Competitive Disadvantage or Commercial Advantage	Medicine Hat January 31-February 2, 1992
Creating Competitive Advantage Through a Knowledge-Based Economy	Calgary February 14-16, 1992
Managing Cultural Diversity: The Impact of Changing Demographics and Immigration on the Economy	Grande Prairie March 13-15, 1992
Cities and the Wealth of Nations: The Role of Municipalities in Developing an Innovation-Driven Economy	Edmonton March 20-22, 1992
The Relationship Between Alberta's Public, Private and Labour Sectors Through the 1990s: Prospects for Partnerships	Red Deer April 3-5, 1992

Unlike the Regional Public Forums, the Round Table sessions were not open to the public. Each Round Table involved approximately 25-35 participants, selected by the Banff Centre on the basis of their knowledge or recognized expertise in the issue being discussed. A summary of the Round Table results will be released by the Banff Centre in May 1992, followed by a report on each Round Table topic.

The Premier's Conference on Alberta's Economic Future

The culminating event in the public consultation process is the Premier's Conference on Alberta's Economic Future, to be held in Calgary May 28-29, 1992. The conference will be chaired by Premier Don R. Getty and will bring together approximately 500 delegates from across the province.

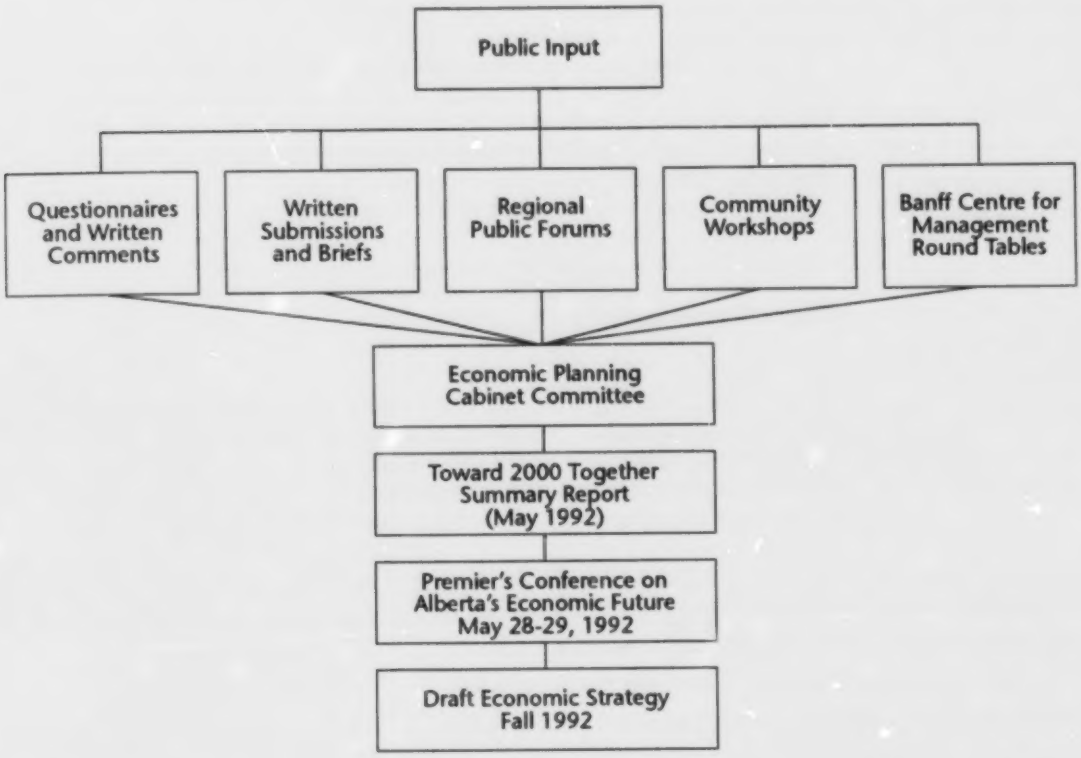
Delegates have been invited from a cross-section of stakeholder groups who participated in the Toward 2000 Together consultations. These include business, labour, government, educators, students, aboriginal groups, environmental organizations and various social agencies. This will ensure that the conference reflects a broad perspective on the various issues which will be discussed.

Delegates will review the results of the consultative process and explore the range of options and choices available in developing a new economic strategy for the province. The conference will make extensive use of workshop sessions to allow the participants to take part in smaller group discussions. The findings of these workshops will then be reported in plenary sessions to facilitate the development of broader themes, directions and recommendations.

Following the conference, a report of the proceedings and key findings will be prepared and publicly released. The input and guidance received will be used as a basis for developing Alberta's new economic strategy. It is expected that a draft strategy will be completed by Fall 1992.

The chart on the following page reviews the key steps in the Toward 2000 Together public consultation process.

Toward 2000 Together
Public Consultation Process


Public Input
Questionnaires and Written Comments
Written Submissions and Briefs
Regional Public Forums
Community Workshops
Banff Centre for Management Round Tables
Economic Planning Cabinet Committee
Toward 2000 Together Summary Report (May 1992)
Premier's Conference on Alberta's Economic Future May 28-29, 1992
Draft Economic Strategy Fall 1992

II.

What Albertans are Saying

Throughout the Toward 2000 Together consultations, Albertans provided a wide range of views on a great number of issues. However, certain issues arose many times and were generally seen to be of particular importance to Albertans.

This section identifies these issues and the broader context or "vision" in which they were raised. It concludes with a brief overview of some of the common themes which emerged in the questionnaires and written comments, the Regional Public Forums, and in the many submissions and briefs received.

Alberta's Economic Vision

The Toward 2000 Together discussion paper asked Albertans to consider the following vision for the Alberta economy in the year 2000. This vision statement was presented only as a basis for further discussion. Albertans were encouraged to comment on whether they viewed this as an appropriate vision, to suggest amendments or to recommend alternatives.

> *Alberta is a diversified, internationally competitive economy which provides challenging employment opportunities and the means to maintain the quality programs that Albertans have come to expect in education, health and social services. Alberta is a leader in protecting the environment and ensuring that future generations can sustain prosperity, living standards and continued quality of life.*
>
> Toward 2000 Together Discussion Paper

The importance of establishing a clear and realistic vision of Alberta's economic future was referred to many times during the consultations. Most agree that a vision which Albertans can share will be crucial in the development and successful implementation of Alberta's new economic strategy.

> *The establishment of a vision is only the first step in the process ... the vision must be founded on a set of beliefs that are held by all the key stakeholders.*
>
> Alberta Chamber of Resources

Many Albertans commented that the vision presented in the discussion paper adequately captures the interrelationships between the economy,

the environment, and the ability to sustain a high quality of life. Still, there were a number of suggested amendments. These include explicitly recognizing the need to encourage private sector investment, to ensure equal opportunities for all Albertans, and to move away from "programs that Albertans have come to expect" to a more realistic view of programs that are "affordable."

Others said the importance of increased cooperation among stakeholders in developing a more competitive economy must be better reflected in the vision statement. The notion of building on Alberta's strengths — a skilled and productive workforce, an entrepreneurial business climate, science and technology, and a strong and diverse resource base — was suggested as another possible amendment.

Several submissions stressed that although the vision statement recognizes the importance of competitiveness, it fails to acknowledge that Alberta's resource industries will remain a key contributor to economic growth and prosperity. In addition to the direct benefits derived by Albertans from the resource industries — energy, agriculture and forestry — it was argued that resource-based processing and manufacturing will continue to provide a strong foundation for economic diversification into the future.

> *"The petroleum industry is Alberta's strongest economic player and therefore the strongest base upon which to build diversity."*
>
> Canadian Petroleum Association

> *"Adding value to resource products is an excellent way of diversifying our resource-based economy and generating permanent employment opportunities."*
>
> City of St. Albert

At the same time, some Albertans expressed concerns that even an amended vision would be far too "generic" and "abstract" and could apply to almost any jurisdiction in the industrialized world. Although they did not recommend any alternatives, they suggest increased attention be given to setting out specific priorities and objectives in order to provide a more substantive framework for developing Alberta's new economic strategy.

A number of submissions put forward their own economic vision for Alberta. A brief sampling of some of these vision statements follows.

> *Alberta is a desirable place to live and work in terms of quality of life, universally available educational facilities, meaningful work for all who want it, and a vibrant, stable economy with development funded by the private sector and facilitated by government.*
>
> Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta

> *Our vision of the early 21st century is one that is even more influenced and dependent upon technology. This dependence transcends all sectors of the economy ... no sector of society is immune to the application of technology. The challenge we all share is to develop a technology culture that encourages the openness of new ideas and concepts while preserving our social and cultural values.*
>
> Alberta Microelectronic Centre

> *Alberta, a member of the global community, is a leader in sustainable development, ensuring a healthy environment, a healthy economy, and a high quality of life in the present and the future.*
>
> Alberta Round Table on Environment and Economy

Common Issues and Themes

The issues listed below are those most frequently mentioned by Albertans as being important in the development of a new economic strategy. While there is general agreement that these issues are important to Alberta, differences of opinion clearly exist regarding overall priorities and the specific response or approach to be taken.

Please note that these issues are not ranked in priority order. They are presented only to stimulate further discussion and to reflect widely-held views and opinions expressed in the questionnaires, written comments, presentations and submissions.

Albertans generally said that they would like to see the province's new economic strategy:

- Recognize that our business community is competing in a global market.
- Respond to the rapid pace of technological change and innovation.
- Foster greater collaboration and see stakeholders form more effective working partnerships.
- Improve our education system to equip students with more marketable skills.
- Change the attitudes of individuals and businesses toward training and life- long learning.
- Protect our environment and encourage greater resource conservation.
- Ensure our tax system and business climate attract investment.
- Recognize our existing strengths in energy, agriculture, forestry and tourism.
- Focus on upgrading and adding value to Alberta's resources before they are exported.
- Provide more efficient government and ensure there is a balanced budget.
- Re-examine the need to provide direct financial assistance to individual businesses.
- Encourage all levels of government to devote more attention to infrastructure.
- Encourage entrepreneurship and small business growth.
- Enhance the availability of financing for local projects.
- Ensure technology is used to improve productivity and competitiveness.
- Achieve greater cooperation between labour and management in the workplace.
- Take advantage of export opportunities in international markets.
- Reduce internal barriers to trade within Canada.
- Encourage more cooperation and eliminate duplication among all levels of government.
- Maintain the integrity and affordability of Alberta's health care system and our social programs.

Many Albertans touched on the need to find new ways of addressing issues and finding solutions that work in a world which is becoming increasingly complex. Assumptions that were the basis of economic policy in the past are now seen as being challenged by restructuring in the major industrial economies, emergence of new competitors and the rapid pace of technological innovation. Some suggested that the concepts and measures of economic performance are undergoing profound change and that issues are more integrated and interdependent than many have recognized.

With shifts in values and attitudes affecting all aspects of our society, many Albertans see the need for a very different culture or mindset to better manage the process of economic and social change. A large number of stakeholders indicated that they want to be more involved in the development and implementation of economic strategies and to redefine their traditional relationships with both government and non-government stakeholders. Cooperation, rather than adversarial relationships, was often mentioned as the key to economic success.

Much emphasis was placed on the importance of innovation, the need to establish new partnerships, and the need to define what role government should play in promoting economic development. These are the key elements of a new business culture which many feel should be reflected in Alberta's new economic strategy.

The following is an overview of the views which were expressed by Albertans in each of these areas. Direct quotations from individuals and key stakeholders are presented where these reflect the views of a large number of Albertans.

Innovation

Most Albertans recognize that the pace of change is accelerating and that the ability to innovate and quickly adapt will increasingly determine our competitive position in the global economy. A large number of Albertans feel that a key determinant of whether Alberta successfully makes the transition to a higher value-added economy will be our ability to develop a more entrepreneurial and innovation-driven business culture.

> *Change and uncertainty are, almost by definition, unsettling ... we must accept and embrace change, competition and innovation if we wish to maintain, let alone improve, our standard of living.*
>
> AltaCan Telecom Inc.

Many Albertans feel strongly that the education system needs to focus greater attention on providing basic skills and a "platform" for life-long

learning. The skills, ingenuity and adaptability of Alberta's workforce was often mentioned as the most important vehicle for enhancing innovation and adapting to a changing business environment.

Partnerships

The word "partnership" was used many times. Most agreed that key stakeholders — governments, business, labour and educators — will have to establish more effective partnerships and cooperative approaches in the future. There was a sense that the processes for managing change must also be made more inclusive — informing and involving all stakeholders in major decisions affecting the province. The Toward 2000 Together initiative was viewed as a positive step in this direction.

> *"It's a crucial time for all players in the province to understand each other; to share our dreams and be frank about our goals. In a global marketplace, we must work together rather than at cross purposes, or we will fail."*
> Jan Reimer, Mayor of Edmonton

A large number of Albertans stressed the importance of ongoing consultations and cooperation in implementing Alberta's new economic strategy. Some even suggested that various stakeholder groups become more directly involved in drafting the strategy. Others downplayed the importance of the strategy paper, saying that what is important is to develop new cooperative approaches to deal with various economic issues.

> *"Economic diversification and global competitiveness must be built and sustained on broad consensus among all levels of government, business, labour and educators."*
> City of Lethbridge Standing Committee on Economic Development

Many cited the potential for greater cooperation among government, business and educators in such areas as curriculum development, career planning and easing the school-to-work transition. Others said they wanted to see a more coordinated approach in undertaking research and development and in the commercialization of new technologies.

The relationship between employers and employees was referred to by some as having the potential to either contribute to or impede Alberta's ability to succeed in the global economy. Ensuring greater equity in the workplace and building a more cooperative, less adversarial industrial relations climate were the issues mentioned most often. At a more general level, the need to recognize and accommodate cultural diversity as an "asset" was also mentioned in a number of submissions.

> *Alberta's competitive position in the global marketplace ultimately derives from a competitive, quality work environment and harmonious employee/employer relations ... if these elements do not exist, Alberta will find it difficult to compete.*
>
> B.M. Slowikowski, Red Deer

The Role of Government

The vast majority of Albertans believe that economic development is important to Alberta and that government should play a major role in the economy. However, many said that government needs to redefine its role and overall approach to economic development.

There was a strong consensus among participants in the Regional Public Forums that government needs to move away from the use of direct financial assistance to business and concentrate more on creating an attractive business and investment climate in the province. This position was also generally supported in the various submissions which were forwarded to the Alberta government.

> *Government should be cautious in picking winners and losers, but rather make the playing field as level as possible through cultivating an environment for business, then allowing business and market forces to unfold.*
>
> Northern Telecom Canada Ltd.

Of those who responded to the questionnaire, it is interesting to note that two-thirds agree that the Alberta government should target specific industries for financial and other support if economic analysis shows they have strong potential for diversifying the economy. Although the questionnaire also indicates that the respondents are primarily in favour of non-financial assistance to business, the apparent preference for a more targeted approach to economic development is in contrast to the market-based approach suggested through the Regional Public Forums and in the majority of written submissions.

Infrastructure and other support services — education, health, social services, transportation, research and development, business counselling and the dissemination of business information — were also frequently mentioned as areas where government has an important role. Many Albertans feel that government needs to focus more attention on providing the necessary infrastructure to better facilitate economic growth and development.

> *Economic development has to be done by way of promotion and development of infrastructure rather than by way of subsidies to industries.*
> Ted Grimm, Mayor of Medicine Hat

A few stakeholders acknowledged that government's role was sometimes complicated by the fact that other jurisdictions offer direct financial assistance or other financial incentives. The point was made that in some cases government may have little choice but to "level the playing field" with regard to the assistance being offered elsewhere. The agricultural subsidies currently being offered by the European Community and the United States were cited as examples.

> *In particular circumstances, such as the current agricultural crisis, and the need to attract a more diverse industrial base, government sometimes must take a more active role in providing assistance and encouragement to the private sector.*
> Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

In commenting on the role of government in promoting economic development, many said the need to balance the provincial budget was even more important. Government spending, the number of civil servants and government bureaucracy were all identified as areas where government should take action to balance the budget.

> *Alberta businessmen believe the government must be involved in economic development. However, they believe even more strongly that the government must focus on balancing the budget.*
> Ernst & Young Management Consultants

A large number of Albertans said that they would like to see the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund used both to diversify the economy and augment government revenues to help maintain current services. Others commented that the time has come to undertake a comprehensive review of the Fund's mandate and how it should be managed in the future. There were also some suggestions that the Fund be liquidated and used to pay off Alberta's public debt.

Six Common Themes

Over the course of the Toward 2000 Together consultations, Albertans presented a diversity of views on many subjects. At the same time, however, six common themes were evident in the input Albertans provided. Following is a list of these broad themes, which were reflected in many of the comments, briefs and submissions made during the public consultations.

1. The Future of Resources
2. A Knowledge-Based Economy
3. Education, Training and Life-Long Learning
4. Competing in a Global Economy
5. Environment and Sustainable Development
6. Community-Based Economic Development

These themes, for the most part, encompass all the issues identified as being important in developing a new economic strategy for the province. They also appear to represent an effective means of grouping and bringing better focus to the various issues.

Following is a short synopsis of what Albertans are saying related to each of the six themes. Direct quotations from individual Albertans and key stakeholders are again presented where appropriate to reflect the more common views and concerns which were expressed.

1. The Future of Resources

There is general agreement that overall economic activity in Alberta is still very much influenced by the province's resource industries — energy, agriculture and forestry. Despite recent diversification efforts, many Albertans believe that Alberta's resource industries will continue to be a dominant part of the economy for some time to come. Accordingly, they feel that it is critical that Alberta's new economic strategy not overlook the continuing importance and potential for further resource-based development.

> *"The resource industries are the cornerstone of the Alberta economy. The continuing development of our resource industries will ensure that Alberta and Canada have an economic base from which to expand. Support industries will follow and generate further economic expansion."*
>
> Syncrude Canada Ltd.

It is important to keep in mind that agriculture is a truly renewable resource. If properly looked after, it will continue to create economic activity, year after year, in an undiminished fashion.

Alberta Wheat Pool

A large number also feel that government needs to give increased priority to encouraging the further growth and development of industries that upgrade and add value to the province's resources. The success Alberta has achieved in industries such as petrochemicals and food processing were used as examples of the approach government should be taking in building on the province's existing resource strengths and creating new markets for our primary commodities.

A diversification strategy based on the growth of a strong value-added manufacturing sector utilizing the existing resource sector is vital to Alberta.

Canadian Manufacturers' Association

The development and application of new technologies in the resource industries and in resource-based manufacturing is seen as crucial to increasing competitiveness in global markets. With continuing low prices for many of the province's primary resource commodities, technological innovation appears to be receiving even greater attention as a means to improve overall production efficiencies.

A number of stakeholders in the energy industry noted that there was an urgent need for government to reduce royalty levels and the "fiscal burden" being placed on the industry. These stakeholders stressed that a more competitive tax, fiscal and regulatory environment is required to ensure the long-term health of the industry in Alberta.

If the government were to reduce royalties, the oil and gas industry would achieve an activity level and financial performance consistent with the economic realities in the 1990s. The alternative, not altering royalties, is a smaller, more cyclical, less active industry.

Independent Petroleum Association of Canada

The majority of Albertans indicated that the most important factor shaping Alberta's economic future is global competition. At the same time, many commented that the application of knowledge and information-intensive technologies will be a key factor in improving productivity and competitiveness in all sectors of the economy. New production and advanced manufacturing processes — many utilizing computer assisted design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) techniques and total quality management (TQM) systems — were provided as examples of the trend toward a more knowledge-based economy.

> *"Business inputs are changing. Today, there is more emphasis on the application of knowledge. The application of telecommunications and information technologies for improving product quality and reducing costs will be a critical source of competitive advantage."*
>
> Telus Corporation

There was also a sense that more needs to be done to make Albertans aware of the contribution of science and technology to Alberta's economic growth and quality of life. Greater public awareness and understanding of these linkages is seen as a first step in bringing about a more innovative and technology-oriented approach to improving Alberta's global competitiveness. Once again, the application of science and technology is viewed as essential to reducing costs, improving product quality and developing new, higher value-added products and services capable of competing in the global marketplace.

> *"Canadians, are for the most part, ignorant of the role that science and technology plays in supporting a modern economy. They are unaware that our competitors are not going to beat us with cheap labour, but with more effective use and application of science, engineering and technology."*
>
> T.E. Clarke, Cold Lake

Most Albertans agree that ongoing education, training and skills upgrading over the course of an individual's working life will become even more important in a knowledge-based economy. The need for greater collaboration and cooperation in the areas of research and development, industrial innovation and the commercialization of new technologies was also mentioned in a number of submissions.

> *"The infrastructures that link innovative minds are the most important highways that we can build."*
>
> Dr. Paul Davenport, President of the University of Alberta

Some Albertans expressed concerns over government's recent involvement with a number of advanced technology firms. Essentially, these Albertans were questioning the role of government in attempting to pick winners and losers in what is clearly a high-risk business environment. Others said that rather than trying to develop new "high-tech" industries in the province, the real priority should be encouraging the utilization or creation of technology in existing businesses and industries.

> *While a brave new world may be coming that is not reliant on our resources, I don't see it in the coming decade, and I believe we need to enhance and support our basic industries and their development and use of advanced technologies.*
> W.J. Page, Edmonton

3. Education, Training and Life-Long Learning

The importance of education, training and life-long learning in contributing to a strong and prosperous economy was mentioned by the vast majority of Albertans. Most said that continuous development and upgrading of the province's human resources should be one of the primary objectives of Alberta's new economic strategy.

> *The Alberta government should have, as a top priority, the development of the province's human resources through imaginative and flexible approaches to education and skills training. This will recognize that people are the province's greatest resource and that education is an investment, not an expense.*
> Dr. Fred Speckeen, President of Medicine Hat College

A large number of Albertans said that strengthening Alberta's competitiveness in the new global economy should figure prominently among the goals the education system is designed to meet. The significant financial investment in Alberta's educational and training institutions was generally acknowledged and many said that, in the future, more effective use will have to made of the dollars spent. At the same time, however, some were concerned that the broader social function of the education system would ultimately suffer as a result of an increased "business orientation."

> *Students will need to function at high level competencies such as critical thinking, effective communications, technological applications and complex problem solving. This prepares them to deal with a constantly changing knowledge base, and provides them with the skills required for life-long learning.*
>
> Faculty Association of Alberta Vocational College, Calgary

Several stakeholders stressed the need for new partnerships among government, business and educators to ensure that education is relevant to the job market and that graduates have marketable skills. The new economy — global, highly competitive and knowledge-based — was seen to have created a whole new set of challenges for Alberta's education system, as well as for government, business and labour.

> *The changes and improvements required in education and training in our country will necessitate unprecedented cooperation and collaboration amongst all of our institutions in education, business, labour and government.*
>
> Dr. Thomas Wood, President of Mount Royal College

Despite the widespread recognition that global competitiveness will require a greater commitment to education and training, many said that government and industry have been slow to respond. Some feel that government is using the theme of "partnerships" to ultimately shift some of its financial responsibilities for education onto individual Albertans. Others are concerned that recent government cutbacks are creating problems of accessibility for some and that advanced skills training is no longer taking place on state-of-the-art equipment.

Industry was also singled out for not taking more of a leadership role in the area of human resource development. Once again, the point was made that new partnerships are required to increase the commitment of all stakeholders in building a stronger and more dynamic training culture in Alberta.

4. Competing in a Global Economy

Many Albertans talked about competitiveness as a measure of our ability to innovate and to produce the kinds of products and services that people want to buy. Rather than being associated with layoffs and lower wages, the need to be competitive was seen more as a necessary

response to the realities of the global marketplace. In this context, competitiveness is viewed as being essential for continued economic growth, job creation and maintaining both our standard of living and high quality of life.

> *The first and absolutely essential foundation of any economic success is free, small, competitive enterprise. That small competitive economic base will likely be manufacturing in orientation, but more and more it will be service oriented information-based as time changes.*
>
> Canadian Organization of Small Business

Most Albertans agree that competitiveness is the key issue in building a strong, diversified economy. However, some are concerned that Alberta's competitive position is eroding both domestically and internationally. A number of factors were cited as being responsible for this trend: the increased tax burden on business, a regulatory environment which is becoming more complex, and the growing level of public sector debt.

There was general agreement that the presence of internal barriers to trade within Canada are also preventing Alberta from becoming more competitive. Many commented that in an era of free trade with the United States, Alberta businesses should be able to trade as freely with other Canadian provinces as they now do with American states.

> *Government needs to take a more active role in working with industry to identify and deal with all the contraints and business input costs that affect business success.*
>
> Calgary Chamber of Commerce

Although it is ultimately the responsibility of industry to be competitive, most feel that government's role is to ensure that the appropriate business climate and infrastructure are in place to allow businesses to compete successfully. The importance of an efficient, cost-effective transportation and communications infrastructure was often used as an example.

There were a significant number of comments on the importance of entrepreneurship, innovation and building of new partnerships to bring about a more dynamic and globally competitive economy. Many also acknowledged that a strong economy will be crucial in maintaining the education, health and social programs Alberta now provides.

> *We have been spending much more than we have been generating for the past six years. Now more than ever, government practices need to focus on wealth generation activities before discussing the distribution (consumption) of that wealth.*
>
> Fort Saskatchewan Regional Industrial Association

5. Environment and Sustainable Development

There is no doubt that protecting the environment is of utmost importance to the majority of Albertans. During the public consultations, most wanted to ensure that Alberta's new economic strategy is based on promoting environmentally sound economic activity and growth. Central to this concern was the view that current economic activity must not compromise the ability of future generations to sustain economic growth, prosperity and quality of life.

> *Sustainable development must be our future, a future in which we concentrate on our quality of life by paying careful attention to both the environment and the economy at the same time.*
>
> Alberta Round Table on Environment and Economy

> *Management of the economy impacts more than just businesses. The economy impacts people and the environment. Alberta's economy should be managed to benefit all of society and the environment.*
>
> M. Kostuch, Rocky Mountain House

Although most Albertans indicated that they were not willing to trade off the environment in the diversification process, it was also recognized that environmental protection should not be pursued in isolation. Many said that government has to ensure that a balanced approach is taken with regard to job creation, economic development and protection of the environment.

> *There are those in our society who would have developments proceed at any environmental cost and those who would have no development at all, no matter how carefully or responsibly planned. The decision-making bodies must not be unduly influenced by lobby groups and, as objectively as possible, weigh the environmental cost versus the socio-economic benefits.*
>
> D. Haavardsrud, Pincher Creek

Effective environmental protection policies were widely endorsed by industry stakeholders. However, some complained that these policies are becoming more onerous and are significantly adding to the costs of doing business. Several mentioned interjurisdictional overlap and duplication in the area of environmental review and assessment as an example of the increased complexity and costs involved.

> *Having environmental protection guidelines and policy clearly defined before projects are brought forward for approval creates more stability for investors and reduces public criticism.*
> Forest Industry Suppliers Association of Alberta

A number of submissions noted that Alberta is a leader in environmental technology and services. Those who raised this issue said they believe that strong environmental businesses, such as recycling and waste management, can make an important contribution to economic diversification.

> *In the 1990s, a new business era is arising — an era in which business and the environment are seen as complementary — not adversarial. Public concern is creating a whole new market for alternative products, services and technologies. This new market will be served by a new industrial classification called the Environment Industry.*
> City of Medicine Hat Economic Development Department

6. Community-Based Economic Development

Albertans want to see their provincial and local governments work more closely together in providing communities with the "tools" they need to support viable economic development. Providing the necessary support infrastructure and an economic environment which encourages and supports small business development were viewed as being particularly important.

Albertans across the province acknowledged the importance of agriculture to the Alberta economy and its contribution to the prosperity and vitality of many rural communities. A number expressed concerns over continuing low prices for the province's primary agricultural commodities and the impact this is having on rural Alberta.

> *The crisis in agriculture and its effect on rural communities must be addressed. Small communities are important to the social life of Alberta and agriculture is too important an industry to neglect.*
>
> Fred Trotter, President of Fairview College

Some Albertans said that tourism offers significant potential for further diversifying the economic base of all Alberta communities, both rural and urban. Once again, government's role is generally seen as being to ensure that the support infrastructure is put in place and that marketing programs increase awareness of Alberta communities in other provinces and countries.

> *The future development of a system of regional and provincial tourism generators would help to stabilize many of our rural communities and encourage more travel by the international, national and Alberta visitor to all areas of the province.*
>
> Town of Peace River

Many felt strongly that community development must be initiated and led by the community itself. They stressed, however, that the availability and cost of capital is often an impediment and that communities must be provided with the necessary financial vehicles to support local development.

> *In many small towns today across this province, the problem is not generating good business development ideas ... the problem is financing, getting the capital to underwrite a solid business proposal.*
>
> Clearwater Regional Economic Development Board

> *The Alberta government should follow the lead of both Manitoba and Saskatchewan in initiating legislation to set up Community Bonds. This would allow communities to help themselves by investing in their own future.*
>
> Bow Island-Burdett Chamber of Commerce

While other Albertans also recognized the importance of community-based development, they expressed some reservations regarding the possible use of increased government financial assistance. Their view was that the marketplace should provide the primary motivation for community development and that government's role is primarily to focus on infrastructure and business climate aspects. A balanced provin-

cial budget was seen as a key factor in contributing to a healthy, competitive business environment in all Alberta communities.

> *Local regional development must be supported by the marketplace. It cannot be created independently. The government should concentrate on the development of support infrastructure, such as transportation and communications, as its primary method of encouraging regional development.*
>
> Alberta Industrial Property Taxpayers Group

Several submissions touched on the need to develop our two largest cities, Edmonton and Calgary, as "world-class" centres of trade and commerce. They argued that this will be important if Alberta is to emerge as a strong player in the global marketplace of the 21st century. As both cities build on their existing strengths and complementary roles — particularly in the application of knowledge and information-intensive technologies — all Alberta will benefit they pointed out. The complementary roles of rural and urban Alberta were also mentioned as an inherent strength which should not be overlooked in developing a new economic strategy.

III.

Questionnaire Results

More than 3,400 questionnaires were completed and forwarded to Economic Planning Cabinet Committee as input into the Toward 2000 Together consultation process. Many of the respondents also provided written comments on what they consider as important in setting directions for the province's future.

While the respondents represent a broad cross-section of individuals from industry, labour, educational institutions, and other organizations across the province, it should be noted that they do not necessarily constitute a valid statistical sample of the adult population of Alberta. The questionnaires were designed to obtain a rough gauge of opinions of people interested in participating in the Toward 2000 Together initiative.

The balance of this section provides a brief summary analysis of the questionnaire results, a compilation of the responses to individual questions, and selected comments on what Albertans said on the specific issues, options and choices.

Diversification as an Economic Objective

Diversification of the Alberta economy is an important issue for respondents. Most believe the economy is more diversified today than it was ten years ago, and that the Alberta government has played a role in this diversification.

The majority of respondents believe that the Alberta government should spend a greater portion of its budget on job creation, diversification and employee training even though this may mean reduced spending in other areas such as social programs and health care. It is important to note, however, that comments regarding reduced spending focused on government being more efficient in the delivery of these services. A number of respondents also expressed strong views that under no circumstances should we sacrifice the integrity of our social programs.

Respondents are concerned that although Alberta is competitive with other provinces in Canada, it is not internationally competitive. This concern is heightened by the fact that respondents believe that global competition is the most important factor shaping Alberta's economic future.

There is also a somewhat pessimistic view about the future standard of living for Albertans. More than 40% of the respondents believe they will be worse off ten years from now than they are today. A number of individuals commented that diversification is critical to becoming more globally competitive and to improving our overall standard of living in the future.

Elements of Alberta's Future Economic Strategy

How will this diversification occur? Respondents believe it will take a mix of strategies, but the two most important will be providing a competitive tax and investment climate, and expanding employment-related education, skills upgrading and training programs. They also believe diversification will occur not only by drawing upon our current strengths (e.g., resources), but by expanding into the "high-tech" and "knowledge-based" industries.

Respondents strongly believe that diversification will occur only through increased collaboration among business, labour, government, educational institutions and research establishments. These partnerships will help to:

- develop a better labour relations climate and stimulate more joint efforts in the area of job training and education;
- develop and promote economic programs that are environmentally sustainable and find ways in which environmental initiatives can create more jobs and business opportunities in Alberta; and
- balance urban and rural needs. Community-based diversification initiatives will have to be balanced between urban respondents' desire to develop large cities and rural respondents' desire to encourage development outside major cities.

Role of Government in Diversification

What role should government play? Respondents see government as one of the "partners" in the process of diversifying Alberta, but more in the role of facilitator than direct investor of taxpayers dollars. Where direct financial investments are made, respondents feel they should be investments in people and people programs rather than in individual companies.

> ***"The government should not interfere with market forces and conditions, but ensure a strong economic infrastructure and emphasize post-secondary education ... increase human development and intellectual skills of the workforce."***
>
> Questionnaire Respondent

Specifically, the majority of respondents feel the Alberta government's role is to:

- create a good investment climate;
- provide non-financial assistance such as business counselling and opportunity identification; and
- provide tax and other incentives that are available to all Alberta businesses.

On the financial side, respondents believe the government's role is to be more efficient and productive in the delivery of services and to:

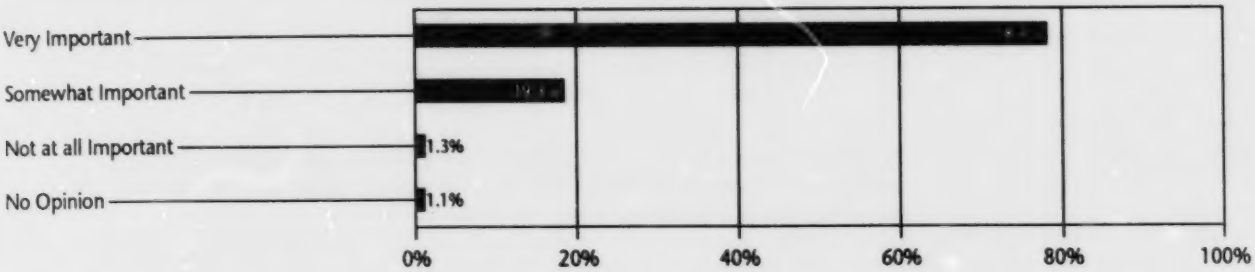
- balance debt reduction with efforts to diversify the economy;
- preserve the capital in the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund while using the interest to help maintain existing services as well as to diversify the economy; and
- better manage existing tax revenues.

Regional Development

The extent to which diversification and economic growth are shared by all regions across the province is an issue which splits respondents into urban and rural segments. Rural respondents are more concerned about encouraging companies to locate outside the major cities and providing financial assistance to municipalities for economic development purposes. Urban respondents, on the other hand, are more likely to support the concept of developing Alberta's larger cities. Other than this issue, there was not a significant variance in the responses between urban and rural residents.

Importance of Diversification

Question 1: **How important do you think diversification is to Alberta's well being in future years?**



In the opinion of more than 78% of the respondents, diversification is seen as being very important to Alberta's economic future. Among the written comments, most respondents indicated a need to lessen our dependence on primary resources and to ensure that high quality employment opportunities exist for all Albertans in the future. There was also a view by some respondents, however, that Alberta is primarily a resource-based economy and that more emphasis should be directed to strengthening these industries.

Your Comments

"Let's concentrate on our strengths and diversify into such areas as medical research, electronics, genetic engineering. "

"I believe it is very important that the Alberta economy be diversified so that there will be less reliance on the oil industry which is driven by world oil prices. "

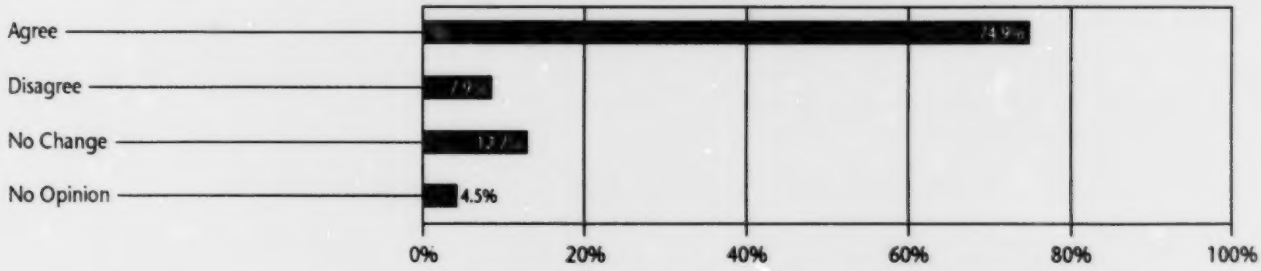
"Diversification into high value-added products is essential. Work on competitive advantages that Alberta has to offer. "

"Diversification is important and is the key to our success. "

"More emphasis must be placed on advanced technology industries. Our primary industries cannot be relied upon to continue to generate the wealth we're accustomed to."

Progress Achieved in Diversification

Question 2: **Do you agree or disagree that Alberta's economy is more diversified today than it was 10 years ago?**



Nearly three-quarters (74.9%) of the respondents agreed that Alberta's economy is more diversified today than it was 10 years ago, while less than 8% felt the province is less diversified.

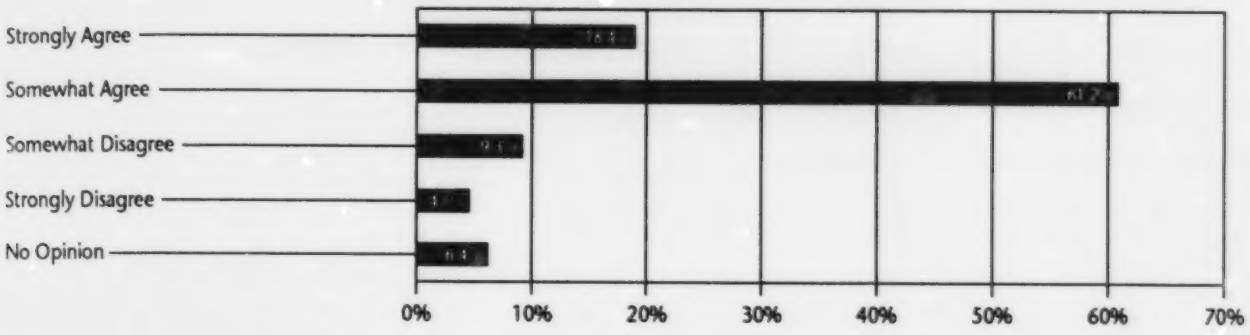
Your Comments

"This province has a proven diversification record built on its strengths in agriculture and petrochemicals. "

"I feel we must investigate more value-added industries. We already produce some of the 'best in the west' from agricultural products to people. Let's market them widely and wisely. "

Question 3:

If you agree with Question 2, do you believe that the Alberta government has had a major role in making Alberta's economy more diversified?



Four out of five (79.6%) respondents who agree that Alberta's economy is more diversified today, believe that the Alberta government has played a major role in making Alberta's economy more diversified. However, 14% disagree with this statement and 6.4% had no opinion.

Your Comments

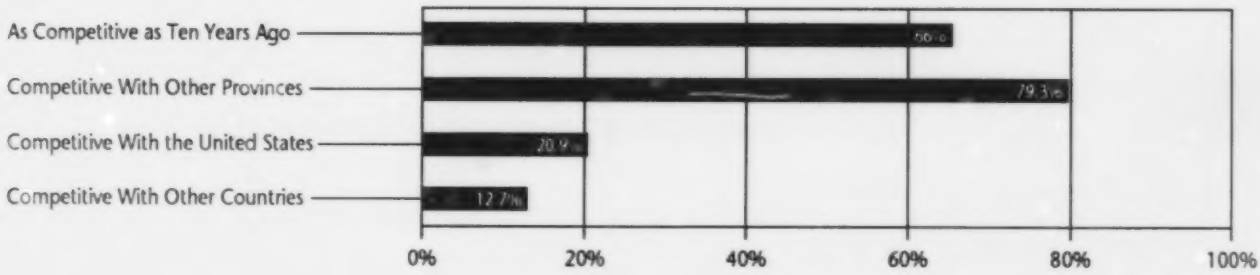
"There have been some successes, notably medical research at the University of Alberta, and to be expected, some failures. Failures are no reason for government to halt diversification, but Alberta must learn from the mistakes. "

"The Government of Alberta took the initiative several years ago to diversify the Alberta economy and on balance has established an enviable record and success in this endeavour. More has to be done to build on this important base as our new industries prepare to compete in the global economy of 1990s and beyond. "

"The government has tried to diversify the economy with some success. However, the goals of diversification and approaches used by government are not well understood. "

Degree of Competitiveness

Question 4: **How competitive are Alberta industries and companies today?**



Respondents are concerned about Alberta's international competitiveness. While they perceive Alberta's industries and companies as being as competitive as those in other Canadian provinces, most do not feel Alberta's industries and companies are as competitive as those in the United States or in other countries such as Germany and Japan.

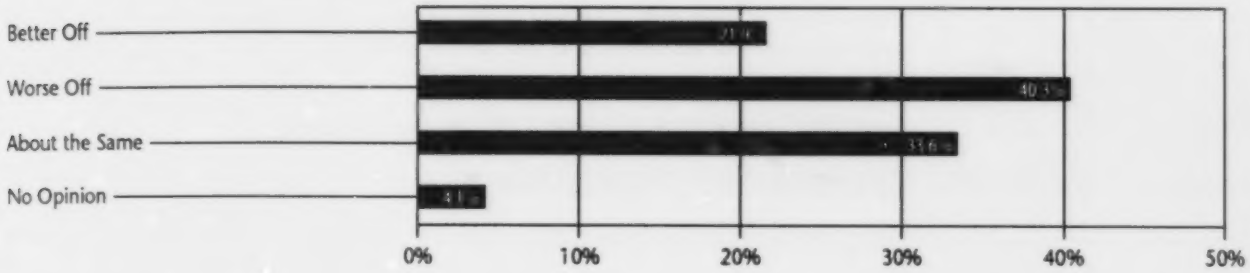
Your Comments

"Canada has been restricted over the years by a small home market base which the Free Trade Agreement will erase. Diversification for Alberta may depend on economic transportation to major markets. "

"In order for Alberta to succeed in future years, it must become more competitive in the global marketplace. Also, to improve competitiveness here in Canada, more should be done to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers. "

Standard of Living

Question 5: **In the next 10 years, do you believe that Albertans will be better off, worse off or about the same as Albertans today?**



Views on this question were mixed, but respondents tended to be somewhat pessimistic about our ability to improve our overall standard of living in the future. About 22% of respondents believe that Albertans will be better off, but nearly 34% feel they will be the same as today, and more than 40% believe Albertans will be worse off. Among the written comments, further diversification is generally seen as a means of improving our standard of living in the future.

Your Comments

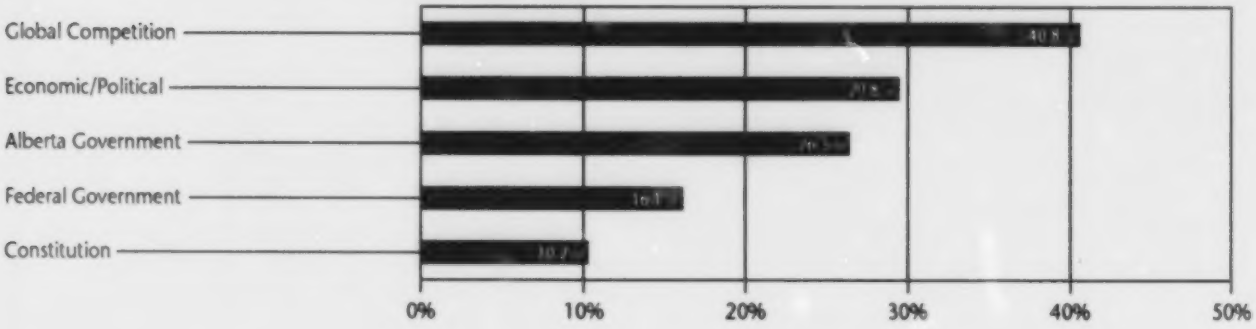
"If Alberta does not move ahead with further diversification thrusts to become more globally competitive, then we will be no better off than we are today — perhaps even worse off. "

"Alberta will only be better off if we make some strong policy changes to move us towards 2000. The marketplace will determine its future business locations in response to a positive investment climate, fair tax burden and a heightened quality of life for its workforce. "

"I believe that in order for Albertans to be better off in the years to come, government should help create an atmosphere conducive to diversification for the use of Albertans. Our goal should be greater self-sufficiency in all areas. "

Question 6:

How important do you believe the following factors will be in terms of shaping Alberta's economic future: Alberta government policies; federal government policies; constitutional changes in Canada; international economic/political changes (e.g., oil prices, developments in Eastern Europe); and global competition?



Although respondents see a mix of factors shaping Alberta's economic future, the most important factor is global competition. The least important factor of the five presented is constitutional changes in Canada. This concern for "global competition" is heightened by the perception that currently Alberta is not as competitive internationally.

Your Comments

"The greatest contribution that government can make to improving the economy and our competitiveness is to remove the obstacles that business have to overcome in order to compete internationally."

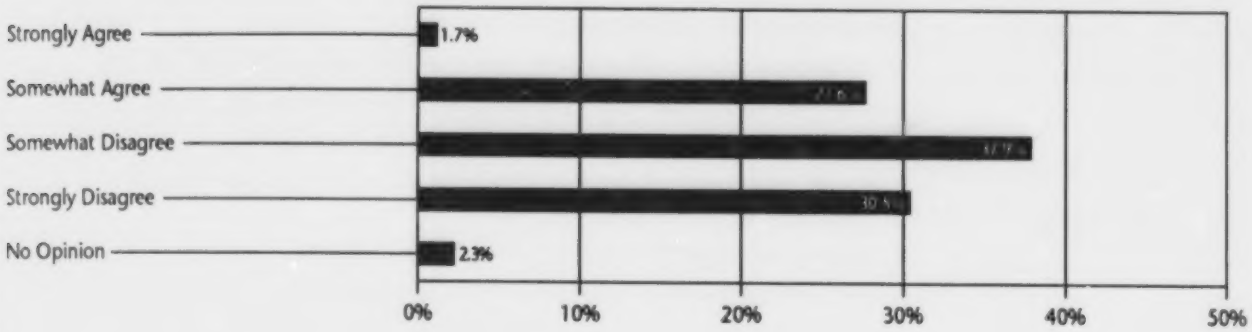
"More emphasis must be made on joining the four western provinces into an economic and political union, so we can deal with these and other trading blocks throughout the world. We are too small to survive and prosper on our own."

"Our economy would be greatly enhanced if federal equalization payments were balanced, thus saving our province billions of dollars."

"Without a Triple-E Senate, Alberta will forever be controlled by Ontario and the Federal Government. No economic planning is possible, let alone control, as long as Ottawa can unilaterally siphon off Alberta revenue."

Question 7:

Do you believe that government, business, labour and educators are working together effectively to help Alberta achieve its economic objectives?



The majority of respondents (68.4%) do not believe that government, business, labour and educators are working together effectively to help Alberta achieve its economic objectives.

Among the written comments, it was strongly felt that if Alberta is to become more competitive and increase its economic prospects, government, business, labour and educators must work together as "partners."

Your Comments

"The issue of government, business, labour and educators working together is key. Often the component groups are in conflict (labour-management) in terms of planning for future competitiveness. "

"The importance of government, business, labour and educators working together means success or failure for Alberta and Canada. Each group will have to bite the bullet and compromise before a trustful working relationship can be achieved. The government's role is to somehow get these groups listening and responding. "

"Labour and management must cooperate more effectively. Right now both sides are too greedy. "

"Government, business, educators and labour must work together more effectively for a strong, healthy diversified economy. "

"Government must act as a facilitator to bring business, labour, universities and financial institutions together in coherent, coordinated strategy to develop and attract new industry in Alberta. "

Questions 8. & 9:

In your opinion, which of the following elements are the most important in terms of developing a successful economic diversification strategy:

A provide expanded employment-related education, skills upgrading and training programs;

B encourage small business start-ups and improve success rates;

C maintain and enhance the viability of rural communities;

D expand research and development activities in Alberta;

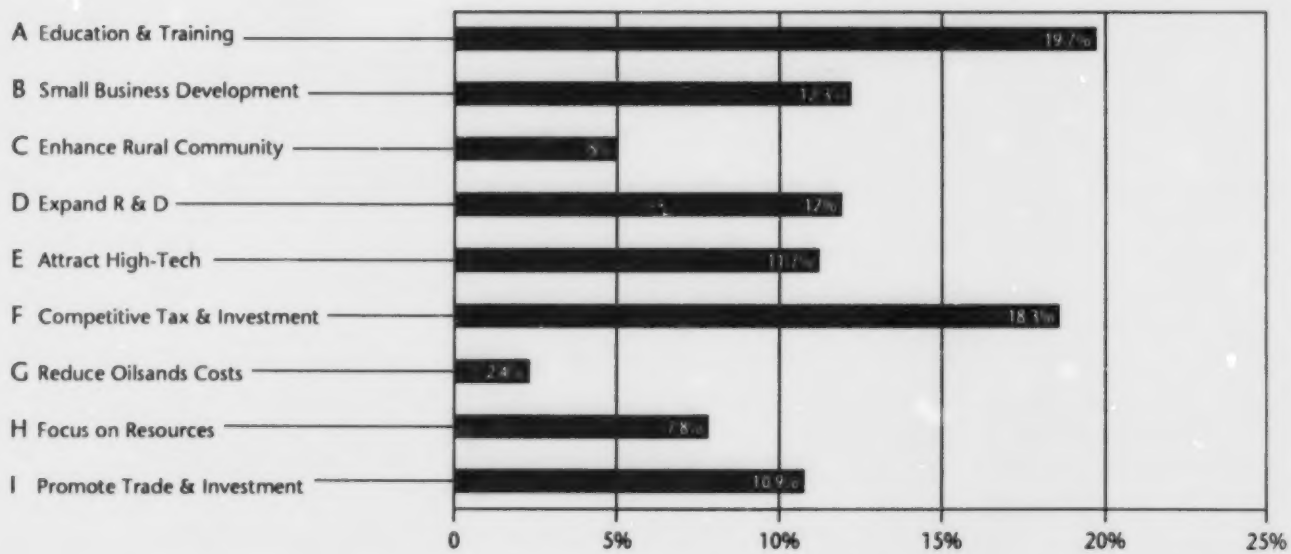
E attract high technology and advanced manufacturing firms to Alberta;

F provide a competitive tax and investment climate;

G reduce the cost of oil sands and heavy oil production in Alberta;

H focus on developing tourism, agriculture and forestry; and

I encourage and promote Alberta's trade and investment opportunities?



Questions 8 and 9 were designed to probe respondents' views on the importance of selected elements in Alberta's future economic strategy. The results are summarized in the above chart.

Although respondents feel a mix of strategies will be needed, two areas are seen as being most important in terms of developing a successful economic and diversification strategy:

- providing expanded employment-related education, skills upgrading and training programs; and
- providing a competitive tax and investment climate.

Rural respondents place more importance on:

- maintaining and enhancing the viability of rural communities; and
- focusing on developing tourism, agriculture and forestry.

Urban respondents place more emphasis on developing a successful economic and diversification strategy through:

- expanding research and development activities in Alberta;
- attracting high technology and advanced manufacturing firms to Alberta; and
- providing a competitive tax and investment climate.

Your Comments

"Make education, training and skill development a top priority but based on a strategy which is well thought out and which focuses on the best returns for educational investments. "

"Stay away from job creation schemes through direct or indirect financing of large ventures; create the best possible tax and regulatory environment for small business and encourage innovation. "

"Need for small business incentives; this is where the greatest diversification lies, as well as the greatest potential for long-term employment. "

"Alberta's greatest resource is its people. Through educational opportunities, skills upgrading and training, our people can compete in today's marketplace. It is a global market; business leaders, union officials and government have to recognize this, or else our competitiveness will deteriorate. "

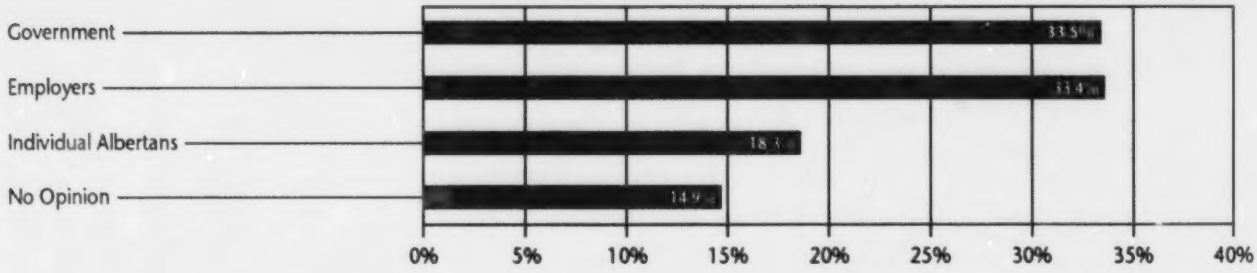
"We need more long-term investment in R & D; particularly in related manufacturing and the down-stream end of energy sector. "

"Education needs to be a priority. You do not achieve prosperity without education and continuous training. "

"The most important element of any future economic strategy is the creation of the proper investment climate in Alberta. It is the responsibility of the government to supply the appropriate infrastructure and tax framework to allow industry to choose Alberta as a place to do business. "

Question 10:

Employment-related education, skills upgrading and training are often seen as a key element in economic competitiveness. In your opinion, who do you believe should be most responsible for funding these programs?



As indicated in responses to Questions 8 and 9, education, skills upgrading and training is seen as a critical element of Alberta's economic and diversification strategy.

The responses of survey participants suggest that responsibility for funding employment-related education, skills upgrading and training programs should be shared by government and employers, and to a lesser extent, individuals.

Your Comments

"The government should encourage industry and individuals to invest more in training and retraining. There is too much restriction of the pricing of post-secondary education."

"Business must invest more in training and education."

"Diversification should be industry-driven, not government-driven. The government already spends a lot of money on primary and post-secondary education. Job training should be paid for by employers and those individuals wanting the education."

"To truly diversify the economy, Alberta's workforce must be better trained than it is today. Therefore, the entire university, college and technical school complex in Alberta requires greater financial support from the government."

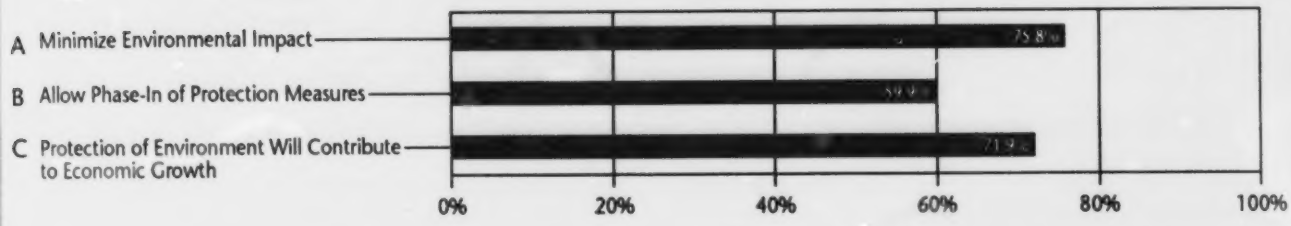
Question 11:

Environmental protection and sustainable development are important issues to consider in Alberta's economic diversification strategy. Do you agree or disagree that:

A the Provincial Government should ensure that any industrial development has minimal impact on the environment, even if this means that new jobs will not be created or some existing jobs lost?

B the Provincial Government should allow industries to phase in environmental protection measures if this would encourage more industrial development and the creation of new jobs?

C the clean-up and protection of the environment will in itself contribute significantly to the growth of the Alberta economy?



Responses to this question suggest an unwillingness to trade off environmental progress for economic benefits. In fact, comments indicate that there is a belief that economic development and environmental protection "can go hand-in-hand" and are not necessarily conflicting objectives.

Three-quarters of respondents (75.8%) agree that the provincial government should ensure that any industrial development has minimal impact on the environment, even if this means that new jobs will not be created or some existing jobs will be lost. At the same time, 71.9% agree that the cleanup and protection of the environment will in itself contribute significantly to the growth of the Alberta economy. Almost 60% of respondents agree that the provincial government should allow industries to 'phase-in' environmental protection measures if this would encourage more industrial development and the creation of new jobs.

Your Comments

"Investment in the environment is good business and a top priority. Maintaining high environmental quality standards should be seen as a critical part of a healthy investment climate and be used as a strong marketing

opportunity, rather than being viewed as a hindrance or onerous cost of locating in Alberta. "

"There must be a balance between the need for economic development and environmental concerns. "

"The environment must not be sacrificed in order to diversify. "

"Be sure that environmental concerns do not destroy the potential for economic development we have in our province. Economic development and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand. "

"Streamline the approval process for projects. The Environmental Impact Assessment process is extremely oppressive and is scaring away industry and business. It must remain to satisfy the public, but must be streamlined. "

Question 12:

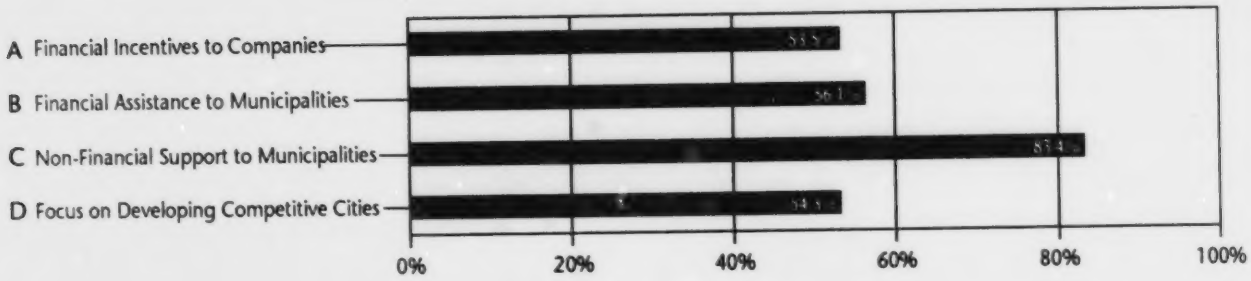
Another issue to consider is the extent to which diversification and economic growth are shared by all regions across the province. Do you believe that the Alberta government should:

A provide financial incentives to companies to consider locations in Alberta other than the major cities?

B make financial assistance available to all municipalities to attract new investment and economic development?

C provide municipalities with non-financial types of support such as counselling and information on opportunities?

D focus on developing Alberta's larger cities so that they can compete on an international level?



Four out of five respondents (83.4%) agree that the Alberta government should provide municipalities with non-financial types of support such as counselling and information concerning business opportunities.

The extent to which diversification and economic growth are shared by all regions across the province is an issue which splits respondents into urban and rural segments.

Rural respondents focused more on encouraging companies to locate outside of the major cities and providing financial assistance to all municipalities. Urban respondents, on the other hand, are more likely to support the concept of focusing on developing Alberta's larger cities.

Your Comments

"A new economic development strategy for Alberta must include a commitment to sustaining the growth and prosperity of communities in rural Alberta. "

"Provide a regional capital venture fund structure to allow rural Alberta communities the opportunity to raise local investment funds and 'patient' money. "

"To compete globally, we need to strengthen our major urban cities like Edmonton and Calgary and not decentralize industry to rural communities."

"I would like to see the government expand the information that is sent to municipalities regarding business/industry prospects to enable individual communities to make representation to attract the prospects to their area; hence, do more for themselves to grow and prosper. "

Questions 13. & 14:

Keeping in mind the emphasis being placed on a balanced budget, in your opinion, which of the following are the most important for the Alberta government to emphasize:

A take an active role in helping build a more diversified economy in Alberta?

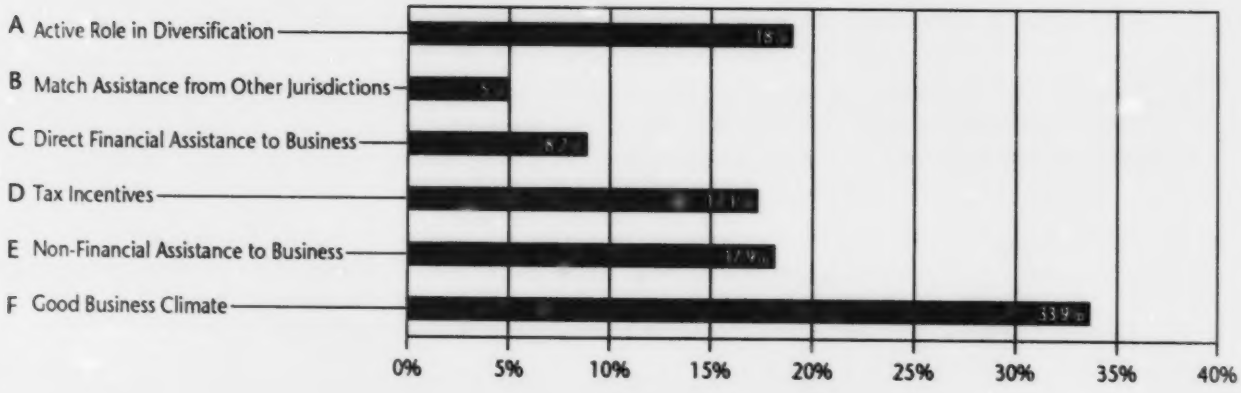
B provide direct financial assistance to businesses at the same levels as that provided by other provinces and U.S. states?

C provide loans, grants and guarantees on a case-by-case basis to Alberta business to help create new jobs?

D provide tax and other financial incentives in the form of programs available to all Alberta businesses?

E provide non-financial assistance to businesses such as counselling and information on opportunities?

F focus on maintaining a good business climate in Alberta?



Questions 13 and 14 were designed to probe respondents' views on what the role of government should be in Alberta's future economic strategy. The findings are summarized in the above chart.

Respondents believe that the Alberta government should focus on maintaining a good business climate, and to a lesser extent, provide non-financial assistance and tax incentives to business. Comments from respondents generally see government as being an active partner in the process of diversifying Alberta, but more in the role of facilitator, rather than as an investor of taxpayer dollars.

Where financial incentives are involved, respondents are more supportive of incentives that are distributed on an equitable basis — i.e., they

believe that the Alberta government should provide tax and other financial incentives in the form of programs available to all Alberta businesses.

Urban respondents are more likely than rural respondents to place importance on providing tax and other financial incentives in the form of programs available to all Alberta businesses.

Your Comments

"Alberta government focus should concentrate on (1) good business climate via tax incentives and (2) support services to business management. This would include assisting Alberta small and mid-size business adjust to full North American free trade and global trading."

"Government should create a favourable tax and investment environment to encourage new business, expand existing ones and encourage diversification."

"The proper way for government to proceed in encouraging the private sector to generate wealth and create jobs is to ensure that the proper infrastructure is in place. That along with a stable and attractive tax regime."

"I would like to see the Alberta government be heavily involved in diversification in Alberta, but not necessarily in the financial picture. I believe the government should be a negotiator, not a bank. "

"Market forces should drive businesses. The Alberta government should provide an efficient and competitive infrastructure, deregulate as much as possible, have a non-discriminatory fiscal regime and provide the most efficient and lowest cost government in North America. "

"The role of government should be to provide an overall climate favourable to business development. Business itself should be responsible for making it work, because business has the know-how and motivation to do so. Government should not invest funds directly into any business. "

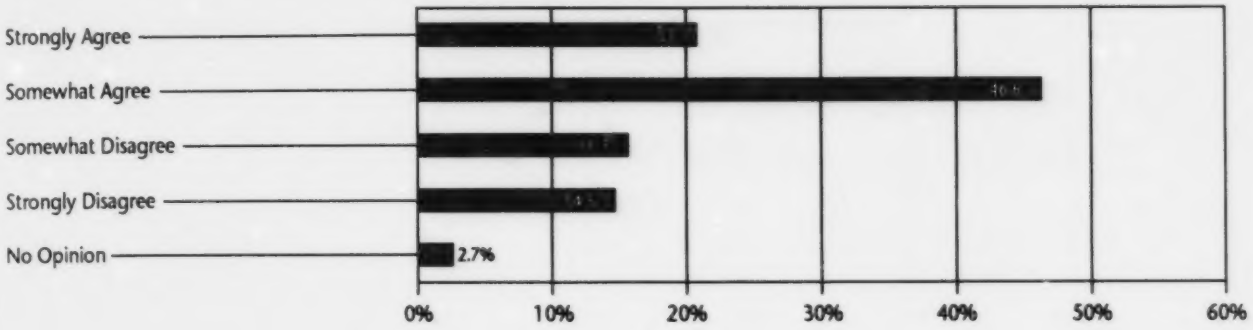
"I strongly believe it is the role of government to provide a healthy economic climate for investors to use their own ideas and initiatives to prosper. It is not the role of government to participate in and compete with industry. "

"Direct financial assistance to business is great, as long as there is a long range plan, and that adequate due diligence is performed. Success and profitability — not jobs — should be the main criteria. "

"Government financial assistance should only be forthcoming to areas that can adequately support industry. Government funds should not be used to create workforces or markets in unsustainable conditions. "

Question 15:

Do you agree or disagree that the Alberta government should target specific industries for financial and other support if economic analysis shows they have strong potential for diversifying the economy?



Two-thirds of respondents (67.6%) agree that the Alberta government should target specific industries for financial and other support if economic analysis shows they have strong potential for diversifying the economy.

Among the written comments, however, there was a strong view that government should not target specific industries with direct financial assistance, or if "targeting" is used, the selection process should not be determined by politicians alone.

Your Comments

"Given the current track record of this government, I feel strongly that government must stay out of the marketplace. It should only focus on the business climate, such as reasonable taxes. "

"The Alberta government has no business targeting specific industries for support and should supply neither grants nor loan guarantees nor interest free loans under the banner of diversification, to anyone. "

"The government must be more cautious as far as financing questionable business ventures so that taxpayers don't pay for failed ventures. "

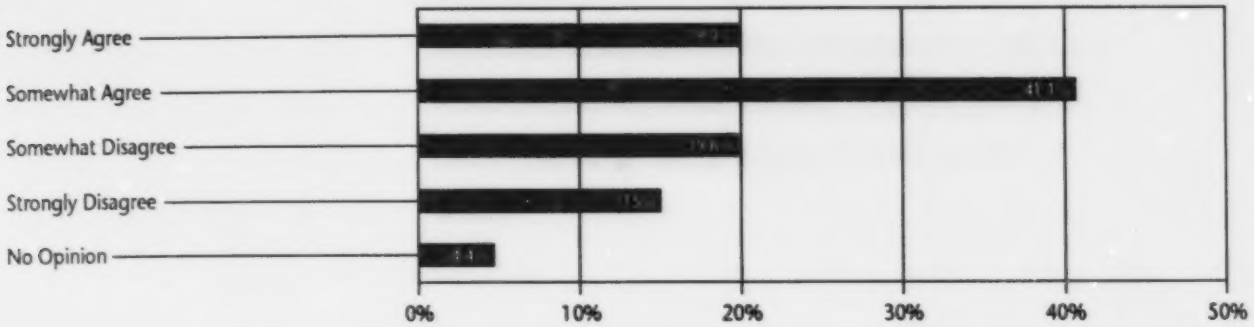
"In making decisions on support to companies or industries, the government should have a vehicle to consult with successful business people. This should be done for general economic policies as well. "

"Ensure that grants, aid or assistance are awarded on merit, and not on political considerations. "

"If incentives must be paid to the private sector, I believe that the government would be better off focusing upon small and medium firms. These companies are more likely to hire and purchase locally and regionally. "

Question 16:

Do you believe that the Alberta government should spend a greater portion of the budget on job creation, diversification and employee training even though this may mean reduced spending in other areas such as social programs and health care?



Respondents feel "investments in people" (e.g., training, education and upgrading) are extremely important. This importance is further highlighted when it comes to budget allocations.

Almost two-thirds of respondents (61%) believe that the Alberta government should spend a greater portion of the budget on job creation, diversification and employee training even though this may mean reduced spending in other areas such as social programs and health care.

It is important to note, however, that comments on reduced spending in social programs focused on the need for government to be more efficient in these areas and that reduced spending might occur in specific social assistance programs, but not in education and health care.

Some respondents also felt strongly that we should not compromise our social safety net to fund economic diversification.

Your Comments

"Promote greater education and health care to: attract skillful labour; create industries and provide steady, secure jobs; create and maintain a good business climate; and maintain the mental and physical health of individuals. "

"I feel that if the government got its finances in place and got the province out of debt by cutting many of the fats of education, social and medical programs, we would be in a much better position to get our development in gear. "

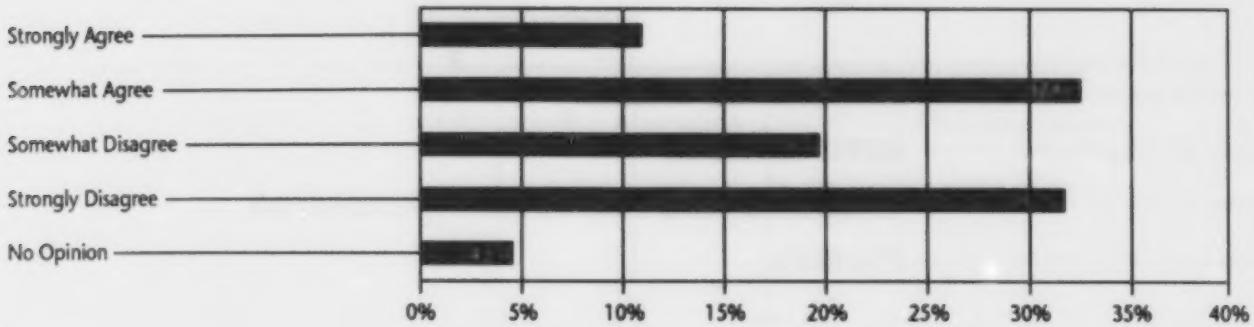
"Please work towards reducing the cost of social programs and health care and use these funds for economic diversification. "

"Under no circumstances should the social safety net be compromised in order to designate those funds to economic diversification. "

"Cut spending in all areas except education, health and environment. "

Question 17:

Would you be willing to pay slightly higher taxes if these funds were used to further diversify the Alberta economy?



Respondents are not enthusiastic about increased taxes. As indicated in earlier comments, many believe that if current revenues and costs are managed more efficiently there isn't a need for increased taxes, or that a tax increase should be a last resort. Just over half (50.7%) are opposed to higher taxes, while 44.7% would be willing to pay slightly higher taxes if these funds were used to further diversify the economy.

Your Comments

"I believe tax revenues are more than sufficient to fund economic development issues if administered responsibly. "

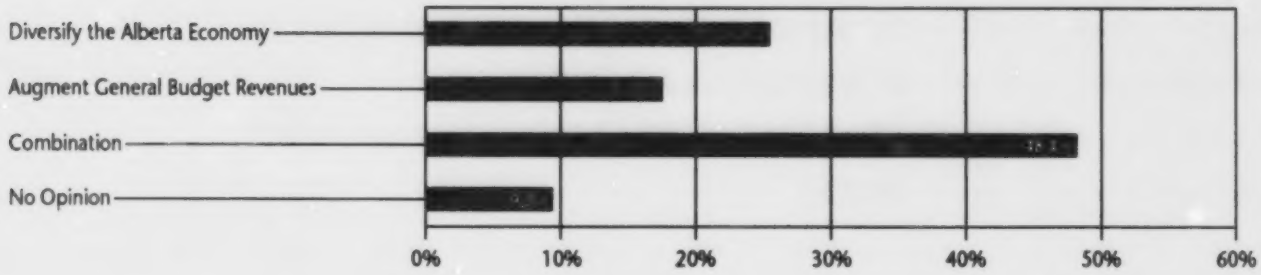
"Rather than paying slightly higher taxes to fund diversification initiatives, reduce taxes and put more money into the hands of business and employees. "

"The surest method for economic development and diversification is to maintain a low tax burden and move forward with privatization. A neutral, low-rate tax policy, not favouring one industrial sector over the other, will provide the best environment for economic development and rational diversification. "

"We take a very strong view that no more taxes should be levied on the public and/or on business. "

Question 18:

Do you think the Heritage Savings Trust Fund should be used principally to: diversify the Alberta economy; augment general budget revenues to help maintain current services; or some combination of the two?



Respondents are concerned with preserving the capital base in the HSTF, but would like to see the interest used in a balanced way. As indicated earlier, although they want to see a high priority on diversification, many respondents also want to preserve key social programs such as health and education. 48.4% of respondents think the HSTF should be used to both diversify the Alberta economy and augment general budget revenues to help maintain current services. In comparison to rural respondents, urban respondents are significantly more likely to think that the HSTF should be used principally to diversify the economy.

Your Comments

"Greater emphasis should be placed on economic diversification through the use of the Heritage Trust Fund, in order that a larger economic base is available in the future to sustain current services. Some funds may need to be diverted to support current programs until other potentials are developed. "

"The Heritage Trust Fund must be only used for projects which promote the economy. It should not be used for maintenance in any sense of the word. "

"The Heritage Trust Fund should be used to pay off the debt. "

"The Trust Fund should be allocated to education, training and retraining. All other expenditures should be extracted from general revenue. "

"The Heritage Trust Fund is just like our oil and gas — it is a non-renewable resource and as such it should be managed in a manner which will benefit Albertans now and for years to come. "

Summary of Regional Public Forum Presentations

This section briefly summarizes the presentations given at the six Regional Public Forums. Given the overall level of participation and the quality of the presentations, it is not possible to completely summarize all of the ideas provided at the Forums. This section is intended only to present a sampling of the ideas put forward in each presentation. To obtain full summaries and verbatim transcripts from the Regional Public Forums, please call the toll-free Toward 2000 Together information line at 1-800-661-PLAN.

For further information on a written submission, please contact the individual or group that made the presentation. Those presentations marked with an asterisk in Appendix A provided verbal presentations only.

Contents

- Lethbridge Public Forum — January 17, 1992
- Medicine Hat Public Forum — January 31, 1992
- Red Deer Public Forum — February 14, 1992
- Calgary Public Forum — February 27-28, 1992
- Grande Prairie Public Forum — March 13, 1992
- Edmonton Public Forum — March 26-27, 1992

Lethbridge Public Forum

Lethbridge Lodge
January 17, 1992

Government Panel

Hon. Rick Orman (Chair) — Minister of Energy, Chairman of Economic Planning Cabinet Committee

Ms. Dianne Mirosh — Chairman of Economic Affairs Caucus Committee, MLA, Calgary-Glenmore

Mr. Fred Bradley — Chairman of the Alberta Research Council, MLA, Pincher Creek

Summary of Presentations

1. **Economic Development Advisory Committee, Town and M.D. of Pincher Creek: Doug Thornton**

The committee has identified three major areas of economic opportunity for Southwestern Alberta: alternative energy, tourism and agricultural processing.

The group called for changes to Securities Commission rules that would allow small pools of capital to be formed at the local level; advocated the development of community bonds; and noted that, if government is going to assist business, "venture capital (as opposed to loan guarantees) is a reasonable way to do it."

Also advocated was a change to Alberta's franchise laws that would open up more franchise opportunities to entrepreneurs.

2. **Town of Raymond: Mayor Ruth Nalder, Councillor John Halvorsen**

The Town of Raymond expressed the belief that economic security and progress for all Albertans will depend on maintaining and enhancing the viability of rural communities.

The submission also advocates the employer becoming more responsible for education/training betterment, with government acting in an advisory capacity.

A user-pay philosophy applied to education and training and to other areas of Alberta life would lessen the burden on all tax contributors.

On the issue of support for business and industry, the Town opposed targeted or specific industry support and believes that non-financial assistance such as counselling and information opportunities are more beneficial in the long-term than tax and financial incentives.

3. **Village of Nobleford: Mayor James Cameron, Deputy Mayor Kirk Hofman**

Deputy Mayor Hofman expressed concern over tax increases directly attributable to school requisitions, noting that these now account for half the Village budget. This situation represents a "serious concern for rural survival." One way to counter rising education costs would be to tighten student loan policies to ensure loans are repaid.

Mayor Cameron suggested that the definition of small business be amended to reflect a more accurate picture of Alberta's small business community since the needs of companies requiring smaller amounts of assistance are not being adequately met.

4. **City of Lethbridge Standing Committee on Economic Development: Alderman Don LeBaron, Chairman; Tosh Kanashiro, Economic Development Manager**

Mr. Kanashiro said that the City believes economic diversification and global competitiveness must be built and sustained on broad consensus among all levels of government, business, labour and, most importantly, education.

He cited difficulty in harmonizing the policies of the departments of Education, Advanced Education, and Career Development and Employment and the need for a provincial/municipal effort to promote a positive economic climate in Alberta. He called for reduction in regulations and bureaucratic processes, a fair tax regime, and the provision of business incentives only if they are needed to compete with other jurisdictions.

A balanced provincial budget is needed "to demonstrate to the private sector that prospects for future prosperity in our province are real."

The Economic Development Committee favours new incentives to encourage private R&D.

Dealing specifically with southern Alberta, Mr. Kanashiro said serious consideration should be given to the Rocky Mountain Trade Corridor. A transportation corridor is needed to take Alberta products to the United States market.

5. Alberta Industrial Property Taxpayers Group: Serge Rand

The Taxpayers Group (made up of Alberta companies and industrial associations representing 190 firms with over 60,000 employees) advocated measures to improve the tax competitiveness of Alberta industries.

Industry must be able to operate within a competitive tax, fiscal and regulatory climate that is stable. Major hurdles to economic growth and new investment in Alberta include its uncompetitive tax environment, high capital costs (generated in part by cold weather requirements), distance to markets, and an uncompetitive government. Statistics Canada figures show that for 1991/92, Alberta government per capita spending was higher than any province in Canada.

The Group urged government to create an internationally competitive tax environment (the most competitive taxation regime in North America) to attract both domestic and international investment within Alberta's economic development objectives and to work with the federal government to ensure Canada's tax competitiveness through such approaches as elimination of duplicate services and simplification of the tax system.

The Group called for immediate elimination of the machinery and equipment assessment option for municipalities for all new facilities and a phase-out of the existing assessment. It also advocates for reinstatement of the manufacturing and processing provincial corporate tax credit, introduction of accelerated capital cost allowance for new investment in manufacturing and processing assets, a tax incentive for R&D expenditures, export incentives through a U.S.-style foreign sales corporation, and an end to ad hoc assistance to individual companies.

Mr. Rand said funding for these moves would come from revenues generated by increased investment. The M&E tax could be replaced by a broad-based tax on all municipal non-residential assessment. Further savings could be realized by a reduction in corporate subsidies and loan guarantees and through a reduction in per-capita government program spending. If government wants top quality programs, and doesn't have sufficient tax revenue, then one option is to implement a provincial consumption sales tax harmonized with the GST.

6. Private Citizen: Lou Campagnola

Mr. Campagnola said that Albertans will have to adopt new attitudes and place greater emphasis on human values to succeed in highly competitive global markets. Ways must be found to eliminate the "constant conflict" between labour and management and Albertans may have to accept a lower standard of living in order to compete internationally. One answer is to encourage individuals to demand less for themselves and care more for each other.

7. Community Futures and Business Development Centre: Don Dalke, Executive Director, and Bob Tarleck, Chairman

Centre spokesmen focused on three areas of the Toward 2000 Together document — small business, resources, and government training dollars.

The Centre saw a need for more training at the business entry level and for existing small businesses. If new businesses have a proper business plan and financial support, they have a better success rate. Existing businesses require training in a broad range of business subjects ranging from customer service to technical innovation. Training should be in modular form and at a small business level.

Mr. Dalke said more effort should be made to explore the potential of a grain-based pharmaceutical and food processing industry in Alberta. Ethanol production, tied to the beef or dairy industry, also could become a viable business in Alberta.

He added the community must assume a greater role in identifying local training needs and coordinating federal and provincial resources in order to eliminate duplication and waste of government funds at all levels.

8. Crowsnest Pass Economic Development Board: Cliff Reiling, Crowsnest Pass Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Kerr noted that the Chamber is concerned with over-regulation by government at all levels. In many cases companies are required to conduct repeated studies, creating major expense and unnecessary delays.

The Chamber also called for closer monitoring of social programs to minimize abuse. People on welfare and the unemployed should be strongly encouraged to make themselves employable.

Mr. Reiling called for more government flexibility in allowing communities to decide how best to spend government money. The government should further explore the feasibility of a community bond program to raise capital for rural projects, and steps should be taken to ensure that young Albertans have access to economical education opportunities near their homes.

9. Town of Cardston Tourism Board: Howard Snyder, Rich Boivie

Board chairman Howard Snyder called for provincial support for Cardston's bid for longer hours of operation for the Carway/Peigan border crossing. According to Chinook Tourism Zone statistics, the Carway point of entry is the busiest tourist crossing point on the Alberta/Montana border, yet it has limited hours of operation, even in the summer. It was noted that Cardston is well equipped to handle the added traffic, offering 24-hour services for the travelling public.

10. Lethbridge Community College: Wally Evdokimoff, Associate Dean

Community colleges are uniquely equipped to be partners with business, industry and government, offering management and technical assistance for new and small businesses and providing technology transfer services, such as data base and prototype development and research and testing services to existing businesses.

Through the establishment of Entrepreneurial Centres, community colleges can play a pivotal role in encouraging entrepreneurship in Alberta. The centres could provide courses for people entering business, help identify business opportunities, run workshops for existing businesses and offer a wide range of research material and resource people.

According to Mr. Evdokimoff, the challenge for the next decade is to encourage community college and industry collaboration and to align community colleges with provincial economic development policy.

11. Alberta Irrigation Projects: Robert Wilde

The submission recommended increasing the Alberta Agriculture department staff in Lethbridge and greater government emphasis on agricultural R&D in such areas as ethanol production from surplus grains, methanol production from animal wastes, lubricating oil from canola, and use of agricultural products in the building industry.

Mr. Wilde also suggested that government view the irrigation infrastructure such as reservoirs and wetlands as tourist attractions to be considered in provincial tourism funding.

12. Private Citizen: Myles Bourke

Mr. Bourke recommended that the private sector play a more significant role in education and skills upgrading and suggested that the universities are not meeting the needs of business. Some redirection is needed, perhaps by tying some guidelines to funds provided to universities so that they can better meet community needs.

Appropriate support for specific businesses to locate in Alberta should be considered. In such cases, government should consider loans and loan equivalents as opposed to grants in supporting viable businesses.

Medicine Hat Public Forum

Medicine Hat Lodge
January 31, 1992

Government Panel

Hon. James Horsman (Chair) — Deputy Premier and Minister of Federal & Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Ralph Klein — Minister of the Environment

Hon. Shirley McClellan — Associate Minister of Agriculture

Mr. Tom Musgrove — MLA, Bow Valley

Summary of Presentations

1. Chamber of Commerce, Bow Island: Bryce Smith

The Chamber expressed its concern with the shrinking of Alberta's rural population and the effect it is having on communities.

Among Chamber suggestions and observations:

- A moratorium should be placed on the expansion of all social programs until the tax base increases enough to absorb the costs without increasing the made-in-Canada cost factor. "We cannot afford to provide unlimited exotic health benefits to every person in the community."
- Environmental controls and regulations are discouraging expansion and even maintenance of rural development.
- We are over-legislated and this is affecting voluntarism. Volunteers are traditionally an important part of the economy in keeping costs down.
- The Alberta government should follow the example of Manitoba and Saskatchewan in initiating legislation to set up community bonds. This would allow communities to help themselves by investing in their own future.

The following three presentations were made on behalf of the Newell Region Economic Development Advisory Committee.

2. Town of Brooks: Kevin Bridges, Town Manager

A survey to gather public input on a regional economic development strategy gave the Committee a mandate to pursue a strategy to reverse rural depopulation and declining employment opportunities. The Committee suggested that its model can be used on a larger scale to formulate provincial economic development policy. The government's role should shift from providing subsidies and guarantees to supporting the competitive position of Alberta business by providing direct funding to local economic development authorities to help them pursue development to stabilize their economies.

3. Chamber of Commerce, Town of Brooks: Wendell Rommens

Mr. Rommens talked of the regional effort outlined by the previous speaker. He said the strategy is to promote the entire region and to let the market decide where a business locates within a region. This approach makes it possible to produce a world-class brochure to help the region compete on the international scene — an effort that no single local body would be able to afford.

4. Eastern Irrigation District: Wade Alston

Mr. Alston espoused giving rural regions access to economic development support programs and recognizing rural regions as a major growth opportunity in terms of population and economic diversification.

He suggested that community bond issues are an excellent way to give people a buy-in to the process and said the government should cut back on loan guarantees and concentrate its funding activities toward regionally integrated initiatives.

5. Medicine Hat Chamber of Commerce, Medicine Hat Economic Development Advisory Board: Rick Derbyshire

This joint submission urged a reduction of "excessive expenditures" by the provincial government through privatization of government services using the "best available human resource" principle of procurement.

In order to convey an "open for business" image, interprovincial trade barriers should end and environmental, health and safety standards should be harmonized among the provinces.

The submission criticized government loan guarantees to large corporations and said efforts should be concentrated on small business, which will fuel economic growth.

Tax credits should be given to businesses that invest in the future and to Albertans who invest in new public stock issues and local venture capital

pools. The province should also create legislation allowing for long-term tax deductible bond issues for capital projects. Community bond issues would be a means of encouraging people to invest in capital structures in their own communities.

6. Town of Taber: Mayor Paul Primeau and Orest Chomyc, President of the Economic Development Committee of Taber

Southern Alberta has great potential for economic diversification. The area produces the major portion of Alberta's agricultural income and should expand on this base.

Assistance is needed in:

- financing the establishment and expansion of food processing enterprises, especially when new markets are available;
- expanding the relationship between local and provincial economic development; and
- educating the public as to the quality of life in rural Alberta to stop the flow of population to the cities.

One of the short-term recommendations of the Town was to roll all government assistance programs from various departments into a single, easily accessible, one-stop service for all communities.

7. Medicine Hat College: Dr. Fred Speckeen

A critical issue today is the need for a highly skilled, highly trained work force. Dr. Speckeen said if Alberta could address only one issue, it has to be education.

He suggested, among other things, that:

- Top priority should be given to the development of Alberta's human resources through imaginative and flexible approaches to education and skills training.
- There should be less government control or central authority over post-secondary institutions, more autonomy in programs, deregulation of tuition and no-strings-attached matching grants.
- There should be greater collaboration on campaigns to acquaint students with career paths at an early age, particularly in science, technology and apprenticeship training.
- The Alberta Research Council could play a greater role in helping manufacturers to become more productive and to create quality value-added products — perhaps by serving as a catalyst among education, research and industry.

8. City of Medicine Hat: Alderman Wayne Craven, Hal Fredericks, Economic Development Officer (introduced by Mayor Ted Grimm)

Mayor Grimm stressed that economic development should be based on promotion and development of infrastructure rather than on subsidies to industries to locate in Alberta.

Mr. Fredericks outlined Medicine Hat's Agenda for Action — Economic Development Strategy, which is designed to market Medicine Hat as a strategic location in the diversified industrial corridor of Alberta.

Mr. Fredericks then presented the highlights of a comprehensive brief the City planned to submit to the Toward 2000 initiative at a later date. Some of the specific recommendations of the brief include:

- a review of provincial taxation and introduction of measures to encourage the formation of capital pools and to stimulate private investments in business;
- an aggressive, centralized marketing and advertising strategy for economic development in Alberta designed by an advertising and marketing agency with demonstrated international performance;
- a review of federal and provincial economic development programs to eliminate redundancies and ineffective ad hoc programs and to adopt long-term strategic goals, including a national economic development strategy; and
- provision of tax credits to industries setting up training programs and hiring technical and scientific students and university graduates.

9. Environmental Services Association of Alberta: Sandy Sutton

Mr. Sutton said Association members are concerned with the new Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act regulations and their impact on the growing environmental services industry. He said the regulations do not simplify environmental approvals or resolve overlaps in jurisdiction with the Health Act and Municipal Act. Without a strong economy, investment in environmental services will suffer.

The Association also expressed concerns with regulations regarding the liability of businesses for site reclamation. The association feels that the current time frame of 25 years is excessive, and recommends that liability extend to only five years, with the cost of reclaiming an "orphan site" after five years paid from an Environmental Protection Fund set up by the private sector.

10. Alberta Pulse Growers Commission, Zone 1: Steve Ell and Ken Biemans

Pulse crop production — primarily beans, peas and lentils — is one of the many essential catalysts to local development opportunities and the

Commission is distressed over federal and provincial agricultural program cutbacks. Research and development carried out by the Alberta Horticultural Research Centre at Brooks and the Agriculture Canada Research Station at Lethbridge should be considered an investment in the future.

The presenters pointed out the low relative ratio of private sector R&D funding in Alberta and said there need to be more incentives in place. However, private industry cannot be expected to fund basic research which is not proprietary. This should be part of the mandate of a "diversification fund" within the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. This fund would also support new crop development, market development, business incentives and entrepreneurial training programs.

To train the highly skilled and motivated labour force needed to compete in a global economy, educational institutions should be encouraged through public funding priorities to educate for the skills most likely to result in payback to society.

11. Private Citizen: Stuart Wachowicz

Mr. Wachowicz, representing a group of teachers from Youngstown Public School, said knowledge goals are losing ground to the idea that schools should teach philosophies of social good and process skills. But this approach is already creating problems for business: deficiencies in oral and written communication, difficulty in spelling and reading, lack of historical and geographic understanding, weakness in mental math skills, and inability to follow simple instructions.

The submission urged a return to a more structured learning model stressing phonics, grammar, geography, history, science and mathematics taught in an orderly manner in a curriculum that is standardized province-wide. Creativity will not suffer, because this quality is dependent on knowledge and discipline.

12. Rocky Mountain Trade Corridor Steering Committee: Alan Joys

Historically Alberta's orientation has been east-west. Now more emphasis must be put on the need to improve Alberta's two-way trade with the United States.

Mr. Joys said it is well known that transportation systems in the U.S. are less costly and more efficient than in Canada. To reduce costs, Alberta exporters must have easy access to U.S. transportation systems.

The Committee suggested the provincial government can help by improving north-south transportation systems within the province and continuing to work with the Montana state government and the two federal governments to resolve border and jurisdictional issues which affect trade.

13. Private Citizen: Gary Lehr

Mr. Lehr said he feels the provincial government has only one responsibility in economic development and that is to provide a healthy business environment — including low taxes, limited red tape, an educated population with a work ethic, clear and concise policies and regulations, a free-enterprise philosophy, a well developed infrastructure and a willingness to cooperate with business.

Mr. Lehr supported the Youngstown School presentation with a call for accountability in the education system for turning out a "worthwhile product." Education must be relevant to the realities of the workplace.

Red Deer Public Forum

Red Deer Lodge
February 14, 1992

Government Panel

Hon. Don Sparrow (Chair) — Minister of Tourism

Halvar Jonson — MLA, Ponoka-Rimbey

Ty Lund — MLA, Rocky Mountain House

Connie Osterman — MLA, Three Hills

Gary Severtson — MLA, Innisfail

Summary of Presentations

1. Private Citizen: Janet Walter

Ms. Walter is chairman of the Alberta Farm Women's Network, which is made up of five farm organizations plus non-affiliated farm women. The group is not a policy body, and therefore, chose not to make a presentation, but members did see her submission in advance.

The terms "competitiveness" and "economic growth" pervade the Toward 2000 Together document. Ms. Walter said the initiative seems designed to "continue the expansive profit goals of industry" through overdevelopment of our water, soil and food resources.

She added the Toward 2000 Together initiative "ignores the reality that our present levels of resource use are not sustainable." She spoke against the trend toward globalization, saying we have more than enough resources to meet our needs in Alberta.

2. Alberta Culinary Arts Foundation: Maurice O'Flynn

Mr. O'Flynn noted the Foundation was a driving force behind the formation of the Alberta Tourism Education Council, an example of effective partnership of industry, education and government.

He said that further steps can be taken by both industry and government so that Alberta can be more globally competitive in this area.

- Industry needs to commit more financial resources to developing and sustaining export markets.
- Government needs to spend its marketing dollars more effectively by better coordination of its international marketing efforts. For instance, there is overlap in the marketing objectives of Federal & Intergovernmental Affairs, Economic Development and Trade, Agriculture and Tourism.
- Government should remove the hands-on marketing function from the departments and centralize it in a single Provincial International Marketing Board with the sole mandate of promoting Alberta and its products around the world.

3. **Private Citizen: Elmer Kure**

Mr. Cure suggested that Alberta implement a coordinated resource plan for our public lands under agricultural dispositions when they are renewed and assigned, to help ensure sustainable agriculture and Alberta's rural landscape.

He said, "1992 is the year to implement a provincial conservation strategy for all development so it is sustainable environmentally. It's also time to invest our dollars and our research and development in ways to use our land and water so that Alberta is a place where we want to stay for the long-term."

4. **Red Deer Tourist and Convention Board: Wendy Martindale, Manager**

Red Deer recognizes tourism as having great potential in contributing to economic growth and diversification for the province and for the community. The Board works with four other municipal partners as the West Central Company of Adventurers in a regional approach to market the area.

Part of the Board's strategy is to attract Albertans for relaxing short getaways, capitalizing on the quality of life and amenities of smaller communities. Ms. Martindale said it is important to develop a broad range of tourism products beyond the mountains and big destinations. Sophisticated travellers want to know about our natural environment, heritage and culture, and we need to provide unique opportunities for visitors to meet our people and take part in community celebrations.

She also suggested that Alberta Tourism direct more efforts to getting Albertans to travel within Alberta, therefore keeping dollars from flowing out, and that Alberta protect its natural resources and develop a "learning culture" to provide a skilled tourism workforce.

5. **Citizens' Dialogue — Community Overview: Marilyn Haley, Craig Curtis**

The following are summaries of views expressed during a two-day meeting of representatives of 45 stakeholder groups in the Central Alberta region designed to generate input for the Toward 2000 Together process.

Ms. Haley said the overriding priority in her group was the need to foster an entrepreneurial culture — an attitude, atmosphere, or climate promoted by government, business, education and labour.

Government's role is to facilitate and to cut red tape. Industry must get involved and make a commitment to training.

Some of the key points raised by the group were as follows:

- There needs to be a greater partnership between business and government in education.
- Training programs should be developed and implemented at an earlier stage in the school curriculum.
- We must promote equal opportunity in the workplace by maximizing opportunities for women and visible minorities.
- Government should move away from direct financing and loan guarantee activity and promote economic development through facilitation, networking, and information sharing. Financial incentives might include tax incentives and legislation to allow self-financing initiatives.
- Government should leave communities to devise their own economic development initiatives while providing the infrastructure, such as educational institutions, to support their efforts.

6. **Red Deer College: Dr. Ed Luterbach, President**

Dr. Luterbach said he agreed with many points in the Toward 2000 Together document and would focus only on his points of disagreement.

In Alberta, the wealth-generating industries — especially agriculture and oil — are no longer able to support our lifestyle. Efforts to diversify by exporting value-added products and finding market niches are still insufficient to support our way of living. We urgently need to develop more wealth-generating industries that can compete on a world scale.

The strategy with the most payoff will be to ensure an educated labour force, a strong private sector, minimal government presence, a conducive tax system, and encouragement of industries with the capacity to generate new wealth.

Funding for education has not kept pace with cost. Alberta's education system is showing evidence of less flexibility and more insularity. Access is being denied and institutions are not being responsive to the needs of society.

Higher priority should be attached to the role of colleges and technical institutes. He recommended closer ties among business, industry and education, more flexible delivery mechanisms, and greater currency in curriculum.

7. Red Deer Chamber of Commerce: Pat Henry, Executive Director

Mr. Henry briefly outlined the Chamber's comments as mentioned in the Citizen's Dialogue meeting.

- We consume 20% of our agricultural products and export 80%. We need to concentrate on continued diversification of our food processing industry.
- Government should continue to promote research and development and to encourage business and industry to get more involved in R & D.
- We need to encourage science and technology in the schools and break down the stigma of technical programs. One positive step is Red Deer's Partners for Progress program, which brings business into the schools.
- In tourism, too much money is spent looking beyond our borders to develop tourism, especially in light of the fact that some 60% of our tourism industry is in-province tourism.

8. Town of Ponoka, Economic Development Committee: Barry Neath, Chairman

Mr. Neath explained that Ponoka's new Economic Development Committee invited ideas from the community on what needs to be done by the year 2000 for economic development. The main point to come from that exercise is that the community has to grow from within.

The community wants to promote local investment through "properly structured incentives" rather than seek outside investment. It was suggested that government could provide more information for Alberta business regarding potential markets for applications of Alberta-developed technology.

He said the community realizes it has a lot of tourism potential and plans to look at developing it. He added the Junior Achievement program is very important. The community has an excellent quality of life and considers this an asset in terms of economic development.

9. Town of Didsbury: Clem Kuelker

Mr. Kuelker focused on the need for the community to develop from within. The shortfall of capital investment has been one of the greatest hindrances to community economic development. Didsbury's solution is to seek more flexibility for local economic development through provincial policies allowing for local investment without the fear of losing that investment.

It was proposed that government pass legislation to provide bond guarantees for residents who invest in local business development opportunities. The benefit of such a plan is that it: utilizes local investment dollars now sitting in savings accounts; uses local business expertise; focuses on smaller companies that can be profitable in smaller markets; and distributes capital over a greater number of ventures to minimize potential losses.

The pool would be used for creation of infrastructure, equity buy-in, leverage with existing institutions and direct loans.

10. Town of Caroline: Bob Kelly, Town Councillor

Mr. Kelly made several points about changes needed in education, health and welfare and the criminal code. Some of the key issues were as follows:

- The school system, UI system and welfare system need to work together to give people the incentive, backing, and living essentials to get the training they need. The current system is unfair in comparison to the student loan system for people who go to university.
- The welfare system should be revised to give people, especially single parents, the opportunity to go back to school to get the training they need to support themselves and their families.
- There needs to be better facilities for battered women and opportunities for the counselling of batterers in the local communities. Facilities in Edmonton and Calgary are out of reach for rural people.

11. Village of Linden: Ross Dean, Municipal Administrator

Mr. Dean said current provincial and federal red tape tends to hamper development and discourage entrepreneurial spirit.

In the case of environmental concerns, these can be addressed through sunset clauses, instead of delays, when not enough is known.

He suggested the concept of small business insurance, like hail and crop insurance, so that small business does not have to lay off people during an economic downturn. He also said the government needs to do a better job of sharing economic development information with business.

Calgary Public Forum

Glenbow Museum Theatre
February 27-28, 1992

Government Panel

Hon. Rick Orman (Chair) — Minister of Energy, Chairman of Economic Planning Cabinet Committee

Hon. Fred Stewart — Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications

Hon. Ernie Isley — Minister of Agriculture

Ms. Dianne Mirosh — Chairman of Economic Affairs Caucus Committee, MLA, Calgary-Glenmore

Ms. Bonnie Laing — MLA, Calgary-Bow

Summary of Presentations

1. **Independent Petroleum Association of Canada: Gerry Protti, Executive Director; Charlie Fischer, President and CEO of Encor Inc., IPAC Chairman-Elect**

IPAC felt the Toward 2000 Together document understates the importance of the oil and gas industry to the past, present and future of the Alberta economy.

The industry contributed $42 billion to the Alberta treasury during the 1980s. Despite lower expectations for commodity prices, IPAC forecasts the industry will contribute $34 billion in the 1990s. The strength of the oil and gas sector will continue to be the single most important determinant of economic growth and prosperity in Alberta in the foreseeable future.

Diversification must be only one part of an overall strategy that focuses on policies to preserve existing strengths in our economy. Many benefits of new industries can be achieved by diversifying existing industries through expanding product lines, improving products or upgrading resources.

The oil and gas industry is working to become more efficient and competitive. Government also needs to increase efficiency and productivity. Taxes and royalties have a major impact on the industry's competitiveness. IPAC recommends that government:

- adopt the objective of reducing economic instability as the focus of a new economic strategy;
- not participate in the marketplace by equity participation or loan guarantees — "don't pick winners";
- change the royalty system to allow the industry to be competitive;
- develop simple measures of public sector performance and apply them;
- pursue a broad spectrum of policies to enhance economic stability and industrial competitiveness; and
- pursue diversification through a market-based approach rather than target specific industries for assistance.

2. Consulting Engineers of Alberta (CEA): Darryl Danyluk, President; Al Stretch, Board Member

Consulting engineering is a knowledge-based industry dominated by small firms. Alberta firms compete successfully internationally in the areas of environment, infrastructure and transportation.

CEA, an organization representing 7,000 employees in 500 firms, believes the role of government is to facilitate and put into place policies to allow the marketplace to operate freely. Some specific recommendations include:

- more efficiency in the public sector;
- streamlined approval processes;
- elimination of inter-provincial barriers;
- non-restrictive government purchasing procedures;
- privatization of services;
- public sector administrative costs in line with private sector delivery costs;
- corporate tax environment that is the most attractive in North America;
- balance operation and administration costs against capital expenditures;
- continued development of infrastructure;

- continued encouragement of research and development;
- applied research that is market driven with private sector partners;
- importation of new technologies to Alberta; and
- elimination of disincentives to enter the engineering profession, such as "liability for life" restrictions.

3. City of Drumheller: Mayor Jim Fisher, Richard Grams

Since Alberta's chief resource is its people and half of them live outside the major cities of Edmonton and Calgary, we need to ensure the continued viability of smaller communities. The most effective approach to rural economic development is for communities to work together in regional partnerships.

The City recommends that the provincial government:

- downplay direct assistance in favour of a more global agenda for attracting new business;
- restructure the provincial corporate tax system to encourage businesses to locate in rural areas and pursue targeted activities such as value-added processing and manufacturing;
- expand the Industrial Sites Location Service of Alberta Economic Development and Trade to better match industries with progressive rural municipalities; and
- implement a community bond program as put forward in the Local Development Initiative process.

4. Canadian Petroleum Association: Ian Smyth, Lorne Gordon

While conventional oil production is in decline, there are opportunities to offset this through enhanced recovery and increased heavy oil and synthetic production. Also, natural gas production will continue to be strong.

Competitiveness is at the heart of the issue. For instance, demand for natural gas is at an all-time high. But Alberta is a high-cost producer. Our gas reserves are a long way from market. Our regulatory environment is complex and expensive, partly due to environmental protection policies. The Association, however, endorses effective environmental protection policies for the industry.

Alberta's royalty structure is the number one issue affecting the competitiveness of the industry. The CPA urges the government to revise the royalty structure to reflect changes in the industry. Four principles were outlined as key to the policy framework for a profoundly altered petroleum industry in the years ahead:

- In the future the industry's contribution to the treasury will come from economic spin-off of industry activities more than from resource revenues.
- Oil and gas trade must be governed by free market forces.
- The fiscal burden on the industry must not impede the competitive development of Canadian resources in the global market. This is important in order to reward investors and restore investor confidence.
- Emerging environmental goals must be integrated with economic goals through broad stakeholder consultation.

The Association believes that in the year 2000 the oil and gas industry will still be the predominant industry in Alberta. Without changes to energy policy the condition of the industry will continue to deteriorate.

Mr. Smyth noted that, in general, government should focus on making sure playing fields are level by ensuring that the infrastructure and business environment are there "so the market can pick the winners and losers."

5. Joint Presentation: Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors/Petroleum Services Association of Canada: Don Herring and Doug Rourke of CAODC; Jerry Thomson and Roger Soucy of PSAC

The CAODC's submission noted the following:

- The oil and gas industry is now a "mature" industry but still has a vibrant future in Alberta if the government recognizes the need for change in the "fiscal burden" on the industry. A single industry with a 3% to 4% rate of return cannot continue to contribute 25% of the budget to run this province.
- Alberta needs a regulatory environment that encourages business instead of one that sets up roadblocks.
- The size and complexity of government has to be reduced.

PSAC's submission said the spin-off of the oil field service and supply industry in terms of jobs is considerable, particularly in Alberta's small communities. Reduced investment in exploration is sapping the lifeblood of the industry. As the industry contracts, jobs in rural Alberta will disappear. High royalty levels will be responsible for eliminating the oil and gas industry as we know it.

PSAC recommended:

- a significant, permanent royalty reduction;
- a simplified royalty system;

- new avenues of revenue for government to replace the royalty system;
- an end to "ever increasing government intrusion" and establishment of an overall resource development policy;
- re-examination by the industry of its seasonal drilling patterns to increase efficiency; and
- a recognition by both suppliers and producers of new opportunities for the supply sector as producers downsize.

6. Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA): Dave Devenny, Noel Cleland, Bob Ross

Mr. Devenny outlined APEGGA's vision for Alberta in the year 2000 — a desirable place to live and work in terms of: quality of life; universally available educational facilities; meaningful work for all who want it; and a vibrant, stable economy with development funded by the private sector and facilitated by government.

This will be achieved through a focused strategy that encourages private development of key industries which make effective use of Alberta's unique resources. Requirements will include:

- public involvement throughout the process;
- identification of wealth-creating industries worthy of support;
- development by the private sector;
- government incentives that support rather than direct; and
- options that encourage investment by all Albertans;

The function of government in this vision is "to listen, cooperate, facilitate, regulate, but not to emulate industry or the banks." Government acts as a catalyst, but does not participate as owner in major projects. Government initiatives should encourage investment by the small investor and private sector investment in public infrastructure projects.

The Alberta Heritage Trust Fund should be officially cancelled and applied to debt. Its existence gives the wrong impression that there is "mad money" to be spent.

Mr. Devenny noted that cooperative financing between industry and government, perhaps through matching grants, would help encourage research useful to industry. In-house training also needs to be encouraged, perhaps through tax incentives for people training on the job in the same way that incentives are already available for university students.

7. Private Citizen: Ann Wilson, Executive Director of Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

Ms. Wilson said that when we talk of "competitiveness" and "risktaking" in the Toward 2000 Together document, we must realize that we have to change to become competitive risktakers. "New settlers" are risktakers by definition because they took the initiative to come to a new country. With their new ideas and skills, they have much to offer Alberta.

8. Private Citizen: Ted Morawiec, Consultant, Global Manufacturing Consortium

Mr. Morawiec focused on Alberta's manufacturing industry, noting that it is possible for government to stimulate growth. Among his suggestions:

- Create a cooperative working partnership among manufacturers, educators and government to provide the educated, world-class personnel that companies need to compete.
- Provide the technical knowledge and entrepreneurial capability needed to carry an enterprise from infancy to greatness.
- Educate the financial community on the needs of the manufacturer.

9. Town of Canmore: Mayor Paula Andrews

Ms. Andrews said the following points should be considered in developing an effective economic development strategy.

- It is important to build on regional strengths.
- A cooperative partnership among local communities, the private sector and government can enhance these regional advantages for the benefit of the entire province.
- The education system must be a priority. This involves all levels of government and the private sector.
- A solid infrastructure is needed in both soft (post-secondary and vocational training, marketing and research programs, etc.) and hard (transportation, utilities, and education, etc.) forms.
- Limited government funds must be allocated to support the winners.

10. Siksika Economic Development Corporation: Ron Many Heads, Tribal Councillor responsible for economic development and Chairman of SEDCO

Mr. Many Heads said the Siksika Nation is the 12th largest Indian nation in Canada and the country's second largest reserve in terms of area, with a population of 4,200.

The nation formed Siksika Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) in 1987 to plan, coordinate, and administer a variety of ventures to enhance the economic development of the Siksika Nation. SEDCO owns, controls and assists enterprises ranging from a supermarket and a garment manufacturing facility to a resort and a ranch. The corporation:

- serves as a bridge between the nation and prospective investors;
- provides current information on business opportunities on the reserve;
- conducts negotiations for specific ventures;
- contributes equity to joint ventures;
- enters legal agreements, including leasing of reserve lands; and
- assists in employment development and training.

Mr. Many Heads said the corporation feels that if Alberta and Canada support the marketing efforts of Canadian manufacturers, the enterprise will succeed.

11. LaFarge Canada Inc.: Jack Paine, President

LaFarge Canada operates a major cement plant and limestone quarry operation in the Bow-Canmore corridor.

Mr. Paine said opportunities exist in developing products for international markets, particularly Asia and Eastern Europe. Industry, labour and government all have a role to play.

Industry must:

- develop natural resources competitively using high technology solutions;
- support training as a strategy;
- work with Alberta's educational systems, offering financial as well as moral support;
- operate in environmentally safe ways and work cooperatively with environmental groups;
- increase research, training and development of high-tech industries; and
- encourage the small entrepreneur.

Labour must:

- work with management and government to improve training;

- get involved in education, working with employee associations and educational institutions;
- encourage productivity; and
- get involved in environmental education.

Government must:

- keep taxes competitive;
- demand environmentally safe operations without extreme regulations;
- encourage the private sector, perhaps through tax incentives or grants, to use training as a strategy;
- ensure the integrity of Alberta's educational systems;
- develop research facilities jointly with industry;
- use the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund to support diversification;
- continually review government spending priorities; and
- streamline the development permit system.

12. Building Owners and Managers Association: Bill Partridge and Herb Reynolds

Mr. Partridge said public funds might best be invested in infrastructure on an as-required basis to attract targeted private-sector investment. Economic development is everyone's responsibility and there needs to be a partnership approach.

Government's role is to act as facilitator and to ensure that its fiscal policies are sound, responsible and consistent.

Alberta needs to revamp the educational system so that graduates come out with marketable skills. The current system is run by bureaucrats. This needs to be reversed.

Also, there is a need to balance environmental and economic concerns.

13. Calgary Convention and Visitors Bureau: Henry Kutarna and Doug Lauchlan

Mr. Lauchlan said the challenge for the next decade is that Albertans must recognize tourism (Alberta's third largest industry) as an industry and bring all the strands of the industry together to act in concert. Planning is necessary and government has a role in encouraging the planning process, which must come from the industry itself. Also, Alberta cannot rely on its natural attractions alone and appeal only to

individual travel to develop the industry. In positioning Alberta internationally, we must also address the role of convention travel.

Mr. Kutarna said the industry can no longer concern itself only with the business of marketing, but needs to look to public policy questions.

14. Town of Olds: Hugh Bodmer

Mr. Bodmer said there are tremendous opportunities for development in rural Alberta, but they require patient equity capital for investment in small business. Communities need access to the types of financial information and equity structures available in larger centres.

Local development corporations have been able to raise capital for local projects, but the funds are generally too small to create leverage or to diversify investment. Local development corporations might form regional funds of $5 million to $10 million. Shares in these funds must be publicly traded, to allow liquidity and to allow people to invest RRSP funds. Such regional funds would give communities the opportunity to invest in themselves and would provide a magnet to outside investment.

15. Alberta Wheat Pool: Ray Schmitt, Mike Scally

The Alberta Wheat Pool spokesmen stressed the importance of agriculture to the Alberta economy: the sector creates one out of three jobs in Alberta. Alberta's agricultural products have a reputation for quality and the Canadian farmer can compete anywhere in the world providing the playing field is level.

The Pool addresses the future of agriculture in terms of environment, education and economics.

Environment: Soil degradation may be the most damaging natural resource problem of the '90s. We need agricultural policies with land stewardship in mind, using incentives and information transfer rather than penalties to encourage soil conservation.

Education: The level of knowledge required to run a farm today is high. We have been falling behind in providing education for farmers. Only 28% of Alberta's farmers have some post-secondary education, as opposed to over 80% of farmers in Scandinavian countries.

Economics: We must have multiple goals for the economy, balancing efficiency with social goals. In an ideal world, government assistance for farmers would not be required, but in reality farmers face large market and production risks with little control over prices.

The family farm must be preserved. It is the best way to ensure land stewardship. Therefore we need stable interest, exchange and taxation rates, safety nets, and support in trade wars.

16. Calgary Economic Development Authority: Bruce McDonald, President; Ron Nichol, Head of Calgary into the 21st Century process

Mr. McDonald discussed Calgary's economic development strategy, Calgary into the 21st Century, published in 1989. The strategy is the result of a long public input process and was put together by volunteer effort.

He outlined Calgary's Vision for the 21st Century, which sees Calgary as a people-oriented city and the world's first information port, among other things. The task force set out three goals and II strategic challenges in order to achieve them.

Volunteers and senior community leaders have organized into eight facilitation groups, each with responsibility for carrying out the steps required to achieve goals in a certain area, such as information port. Partners in the process will include a wide range of organizations from educational institutions and business groups to federal and provincial government agencies and departments.

Mr. McDonald recommended that the Toward 2000 Together process take the opportunity to gain from the expertise acquired by Calgary in its Calgary into the 21st Century initiative.

Mr. Nichol added that the involvement of all southern Alberta municipalities is important to the process. He also stressed that the initiative is primarily a volunteer effort.

17. Calgary Chamber of Commerce: John Currie, Bill Kaufmann, John Simpson

Mr. Currie said immediate changes are needed in economic policy. Business does not want or need special grants, incentives or loan guarantees. It needs the opportunity to compete fairly. The role of government is to maintain the free enterprise system. Government at all levels must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and eliminate policies that hamper growth.

The Chamber recommends that government:

- increase the capital cost allowance to encourage business to invest in new equipment;
- overhaul the oil and gas royalty system;
- simplify and reduce the impact of taxes;
- review government support policies that restrict growth in one area in favour of another, as in EEMA;
- eliminate inter-provincial trade barriers;

- recognize high value-added exporting industries as major contributors and support the expansion of existing successful industries;
- pool resources of industry, research and education to create a competitive mass on a global scale;
- reduce the cost of the civil service, perhaps by combining departments and rewarding civil servants who achieve cost efficiencies;
- support partnerships in the delivery of educational systems; and
- target environmental regulations toward realistically obtainable goals.

18. Calgary Research and Development Authority: Bill Croft, Alastair Ross, Fred Mannix

The Authority believes research and development are essential to creating and sustaining the quality of life for Albertans and feels the province can develop a strong, viable research-based, knowledge-intensive sector by following these strategies:

- enhance the innovative capacity of existing companies through improved technology development, technology transfer and technology management;
- create innovative advanced technology companies through incubators, joint research ventures, and provision of early stage financing;
- help existing companies exploit their potential by joint ventures, mergers and management development; and
- attract new companies to Alberta through pro-active promotion.

The Alberta government needs to:

- reward risktakers by modifying the tax systems to attract entrepreneurs;
- establish a tax regime that is competitive with other jurisdictions;
- attract a pool of skilled manpower by supporting Alberta's universities and technical institutes and establishing for science and engineering the equivalent of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research; and
- increase the number and magnitude of economic engines which fuel growth of new companies by working in partnership with the economic development authorities of Calgary and Edmonton to receive federal procurement, and get at public institutional procurement by structuring budgets and grants to agencies to reward local procurement.

19. Mount Royal Faculty Association: Wayne Haglund

Mr. Haglund said the Faculty Association of Mount Royal College feels it can cooperate with business in many ways, adding there is a desperate need for ways to match students with relevant work experience. This could take the form of structured co-op programs as well as less formal arrangements such as summer employment programs. Work-study programs are another option.

The Association suggests that employers might use the skills and expertise of the College's faculty members and those of other institutions by:

- inviting faculty to serve on advisory committees;
- participating in job exchanges with faculty; and
- using faculty consultants in business.

The provincial government should look closely at:

- facilitating revenue-generating or cost-recovery programs such as tailored instructional programs and research that benefits the business community;
- giving the College degree-granting status for applied academic degrees involving some aspect of work experience or on-the-job training.

20. Students Association of Mount Royal College: Sandeep Dhir

The Association recognizes the need for a partnership among business, government and education to ensure that education is relevant to the job market. But education also has a social function. The Association fears the degradation of post-secondary education and loss of value of liberal arts with increasing involvement of business in education.

It proposes that:

- funding of liberal arts education be ensured and insulated from business;
- increases in tuition be matched by increased government funding;
- the merits of an income-contingent student loan system be analyzed;
- post-secondary education be treated as an investment rather than a cost and be funded accordingly.

21. Southern Alberta Institute of Technology: Dale Landry

Mr. Landry said the only way the post-secondary education system can serve its students is to provide exactly what their prospective employers

need. "I view business as our ultimate customer. Learners buy our training to re-sell to employers."

Canada is declining in every measure of competitiveness including industrial efficiency, international orientation and future orientation. The main factor is poorly trained workers and managers.

To meet today's challenges:

- We must emphasize advanced skill training with state-of-the art equipment to train on.
- Training has to be expanded to emphasize productivity and quality service as well as an appreciation for other languages and other cultures as is required for a trading nation.
- We need national standards and a Canada-wide agreement on education.

The single solution to these challenges is career training, as distinguished from training for scientists, engineers, MBAs and liberal arts. Students who pursue careers in technical areas must not be treated as second-class citizens in the educational system.

Mr. Landry also said that:

- We must emphasize the commercialization of ideas as well as research leading to new technologies.
- Incentives must be provided for individuals to invest more in their own training, for instance through a tax credit for those pursuing careers that society requires.
- Technical institutes must become centres of advanced technology.

22. University of Calgary: Murray Fraser, President; Dr. Don Detomase, Associate Vice President for Planning

Mr. Fraser referred the panel to the University's plan, Building on the Vision, and said the University will file a major brief later.

He addressed some major issues outlined in the Toward 2000 Together document, including:

- Human resources: The University agrees this is a top priority and sees room for a closer integration of educational and economic priorities through, for example, expansion of the University's co-operative education program. The University also agrees with the emphasis on life-long education and training.
- Environment and quality of life: The strategy to increase value-added production of the province's natural resources will require a significant increase in R&D. He re-iterated a 1984 proposal to use the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund to create a trust for research in

science and engineering and one in social sciences. He also said the University is committed to working more closely with industry and government in developing and marketing environmental technologies.

Mr. Fraser said he increasingly hears business people say they want people who can communicate and conceptualize. His interest as an educator is to start with a broadly based education and let specialization develop down the line.

23. Mount Royal College: Thomas Wood, President

Mr. Wood addressed the need for continuing education throughout a person's lifetime in today's society. This will require major changes in the educational system. We are experiencing a fundamental restructuring of our economy and this has fundamental implications for education and training.

We have an unemployment rate of 10.4% coexisting with the highest job vacancy rate ever — over 500,000 jobs — because we cannot find the skilled people to fill them. In Alberta the dropout rate is 30%. But graduates are coming back to high school because they cannot find places in post-secondary education. Even if we could solve the dropout problem, where would students go for further education?

Mr. Wood proposed that Mount Royal College become a four-year institution. The College has established a city-centre campus aimed at forming training partnerships with business.

The College emphasizes the following priorities:

- re-structuring of the educational system to provide a diversity of post-secondary educational opportunities;
- emphasis on human resource development;
- ensured access to post-secondary education;
- fostering of a learning culture; and
- promotion of partnerships and strategic alliances among business, education, labour and government to achieve education and training goals.

24. Calgary Regional Planning Commission: Ivan Robinson

Mr. Robinson made eight points relating to questions raised in the Toward 2000 Together document:

- The Commission, which services 28 municipalities, does not believe government should increase spending on economic development.
- Government's role is to focus on maintaining a good business climate.

- Education and training are a key to success in the next century.
- Economic development and environment are not mutually exclusive.
- Government should continue to support regional and local community economic development and should not focus exclusively on larger cities.
- Research and development are too important to leave entirely to the private sector.
- Government should target specific industries, but carefully and with forethought.
- There should be more information available about the Heritage Savings Trust Fund and there should be more emphasis on investing in Alberta.

The three issues that should be emphasized in an economic strategy for the province are: education and training, research and development and a competitive tax regime.

25. City of Calgary: Mayor Al Duerr

Mr. Duerr said that in Calgary's vision, a high quality of life is fundamental to an economic development strategy. He stressed that Calgary into the 21st Century has involved all stakeholders in a volunteer process so that there is a high level of ownership in the vision. He also pointed out that the human fabric of a community cannot be sacrificed for economic development. The focus must be on human resources.

Other points he made include:

- More intergovernmental collaboration is needed to achieve economic development objectives.
- Inter-municipal cooperation should be encouraged and competitiveness discouraged. We need a provincial strategy for attracting business and must avoid community bidding wars that compromise the local tax base.
- Provincial funding should be used for economic development activities, but maintaining the social fabric is also essential.
- A competitive tax regime should not compromise important social programs such as education.
- The government should re-examine existing economic development policies, for instance EEMA.

26. Private Citizen: Duane Sharman

Focusing on Alberta's electronics industry, Mr. Sharman said that his recommendations would also apply to other high-tech industries. He added

a strategy for growth in Alberta must exploit the synergies between the oil and gas industry and the electronics industry.

The current investment climate doesn't facilitate growth of companies from the point at which they seek to commercialize their technology — when they need to move into production rapidly, market their products, and provide adequate services. Government generally funds the high-profile, pre-commercial R & D stage, then walks away leaving companies undercapitalized.

Among many recommendations, Mr. Sharman proposed:

- that Alberta attract external capital through transferable tax credits, thus motivating engineers and scientists to get together with capitalists;
- that we encourage clustering of high-tech firms to help support the specialized infrastructure needed for growth in the industry; and
- that we encourage closer ties between industry and educational institutions, encourage cooperative research, and foster an entrepreneurial climate in research institutions through funding tied to technology transfer.

Grande Prairie Public Forum

Trumpeter Motor Inn
March 13, 1992

Government Panel

Hon. Doug Main (Chair) — Minister of Culture & Multiculturalism

Dr. Bob Elliott — MLA, Grande Prairie

Ms. Pearl Calahasen — MLA, Lesser Slave Lake

Mr. Glen Clegg — MLA, Dunvegan

Mr. Walter Paszkowski — MLA, Smoky River

Summary of Presentations

1. City of Grande Prairie: Mr. George Keen, Director, Planning & Protective Services; Ms. T. Saunders, City Alderman

City spokesmen agreed with the Toward 2000 Together statement that businesses now base their location decisions on a complex set of factors that include workforce skills and availability, proximity to academic institutions, and quality of life. In light of this, the provincial government was urged to give Grande Prairie Regional College degree granting status so that the workforce would be encouraged to stay in the North. An enhanced research and development network should also be established in the Peace region.

Considerations should also be given to:

- establishing a tax credit for companies locating north of Edmonton;
- upgrading Highway 40 as an aid to industrial growth and tourism in the northwest; and
- development of a cellular communication system in the North.

The City brief noted that while much of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund was generated by development of the North's non-renewable resources, monies from the fund were often used to diversify the

economies of central and southern Alberta. The City believes the Alberta government must take steps to diversify the North.

2. Improvement District #20: Mr. Willy Janssen, Chairman

Mr. Janssen addressed several aspects of interprovincial commerce, noting that this is a major issue in the I.D. because of its proximity to the City of Dawson Creek, B.C. He added similar concerns are shared by I.D. #21, which lies near Fort St. John, British Columbia.

I.D. residents are concerned about the lack of an integrated transportation system for the area and the fact that trucking industry regulations covering gross weight limits differ in Alberta and British Columbia. The submission advocated a common weigh scale and inspection station for the area, manned by personnel from both provinces (similar to the arrangement established near Golden, B.C.).

He also called for a strong integrated economic policy for the entire Peace River region, an area with a population of 165,000 people. One element of the policy should involve planning for greater use of ethanol in gasoline, a move that would provide a boost to the region's agricultural sector.

Also needed are a single regional policy on hazardous toxic waste disposal and an interprovincial agreement covering emergency response during a major disaster.

3. Grande Prairie and District Chamber of Commerce: Mr. Dean Ozanne

The Chamber believes that the future of Grande Prairie and the surrounding area depends on the development of secondary industries, including tourism, and activities that expand on the area's existing strengths of forestry and agriculture. A transportation corridor is needed, linking the Columbia Icefields, Grande Cache, Grande Prairie and the far north. This would require paving of Highway 40.

Since local access to technology and government programs is needed, the Chamber supports the Peace Country Innovation Centre concept. This would offer one-stop access to government programs, public and private sector data bases and guidance with entrepreneurial development. With appropriate infrastructure in place, the private sector will take care of the rest itself.

Also advocated was more effort by the provincial government to: reduce interprovincial trade barriers; recognize that diversification must be built on Alberta's existing strengths; and become less involved in the marketplace. The submission noted that it is "everyone's role" to identify potential opportunities and products to help diversify the Alberta economy.

4. Valleyview Regional Economic Development Board: Ms. Edie Spagrud, Executive Director

Changing community and business needs call for a change in the approach to business counselling, Ms. Spagrud noted. She told the panel there was a need for more up-to-date technical support, particularly in the realm of marketing.

The submission also pointed to the growing importance of home-based businesses as contributors to the local economy. Alberta lags behind other provinces in developing a system of support for home-based business development. Farm families should be encouraged to use their skills and technology on the farm to provide new products or services from their kitchens, gardens and workshops as an alternative to seeking off-farm jobs. This will require a program for encouraging and assisting home-based business in Alberta.

5. People for Economic, Environmental and Regional Support (PEERS): Mr. Barry Diederich and Mr. Fred Tissington, Grande Prairie

Mr. Tissington explained that PEERS is a new regional organization established to help encourage industry/government liaison in promoting value-added industry in the region and to push for the paving of Highway 40 between Grande Prairie and Grande Cache, with an eventual link to Tete Jaune Cache, British Columbia. PEERS is also concerned with regional environmental issues, including media handling of environment-related stories.

Referring to the temporary shutdown of Procter and Gamble for reported violations of environmental regulations, Mr. Diederich said publicity surrounding the event has caused long-term problems for the regional economy. The financial industry and potential investors were concerned about the stability of businesses which must operate under short-term licences and respond to unclear, moving standards related to environmental protection. The industry and the community need clear parameters, including long-term licences and set standards.

6. Town of Valleyview: Mayor Dick Gillespie

While government has done an excellent job in most respects for small town Alberta, requests from larger centres could make it more difficult for the provincial government to look after smaller communities as it should. The prime need is for infrastructure related to education, health and medical care, and municipal services.

The submission noted that a good percentage of the population in small town Alberta relies on agriculture for a living. Yet there is some doubt on the Town of Valleyview's part that agriculture is getting the same attention as some other industries. Although he admitted answers aren't readily available, the Mayor called for greater emphasis on achieving long-term stabilization for the agriculture industry. Programs tend to be

crisis-driven and useful only for the short-term while the need is for lasting solutions.

The Mayor's submission noted that Alberta's long-range planning began in affluent times and some of those decisions have come back to haunt the province. Now there is a danger of over-correction which could stifle long-term development.

7. **Saskatoon Mountain Economic Development Authority (SMEDA): Ms. Delayne Pfau and Mr. Jim Letersky, Enterprise Centre, Beaverlodge; Mr. Doug Bailey, Business Development Centre, Hythe**

The Enterprise Centre is one of three organizations under the SMEDA group. Ms. Pfau explained that the Centre is designed to further entrepreneurial spirit and interest, stimulate economic growth and initiate training and career opportunities within the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 School Division.

She told the panel that Alberta's best resource is its people and while government does not owe them handouts, it does owe them an opportunity to be self-sustaining.

While the federal government has assisted the Centre with infrastructure, Ms. Pfau suggested it may be time for the provincial government to make a commitment to its rural citizens by providing operating assistance.

Mr. Bailey, General Manager of the SMEDA Business Development Centre (BDC) in Hythe, said the office services the entire County of Grande Prairie, excluding the City of Grande Prairie. The corporation promotes the creation, growth and development of small business enterprises in the region. In its three and a half years of operation, BDC has reviewed approximately 500 clients and/or proposals, creating and maintaining over 200 jobs.

Among clients are producing farmers who have invested in part-time businesses, using their diverse skills in enterprises that have helped them remain active producers on the land. According to Mr. Bailey, BDC does not believe that diversification requires large amounts of capital from the public purse.

Mr. Letersky explained there are 24 groups in the province participating in the Community Futures Program, developing community-driven regional strategies for diversification and business development.

SMEDA feels that most support for business in Alberta has gone to megaprojects or multinational organizations and it should now be the turn of small business to receive some support. Research and development initiatives, for example, mostly ignore non-metropolitan areas such as the Peace Country. SMEDA has spent two and a half years trying to

get the Research Council involved, but it has not yet stationed a representative in the region.

8. Alberta Forage Processors Association: Mr. Marcel Maisonneuve

Mr. Maisonneuve explained that the Association is made up of about 14 companies that purchase alfalfa from farmers under contract and process it into pellets and cubes for export.

In recent years, alfalfa processing plants in Falher, Wanham and Grimshaw have sustained the economy of an area which has little livestock production or alternative industries. The submission noted, because of protectionism practised by competitors, policies and programs to support primary and secondary agriculture are required today and in future. Mr. Maisonneuve identified the following issues:

1. Transportation: concern over changes to "Method of Payment" of the Crow Benefit;

2. Workers'Compensation Board: industry reclassification sought;

3. Power (electricity): need for the provincial share of income tax paid by Alberta Power Ltd. and TransAlta Utilities Ltd. to be returned to consumers; and

4. Farm Programs: no consideration of alfalfa for processing in a number of federal programs.

9. M.D. of Spirit River: Mr. Robert Peacock

Mr. Peacock expressed concern that the "Freedom to Choose" concept in relation to grain transportation, which he said is now being promoted by Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley, would result in a $20 per acre payment to farmers rather than $80 per acre, as many farmers believed it would.

There was some concern in the M.D. that, although the provincial and federal government spend a great deal of money on Canada's railroads, they "can't seem to haul our grain."

10. District of Birchills #19: Mr. Edmond Pawluski

The current practice of subsidizing agriculture means consumers, not farmers, are being subsidized, Mr. Pawluski said. "We would like no subsidies but would like a small profit and return on investment. Of course, food would be more expensive if that happened." He said that emphasis on agriculture should be a priority since it is still the number one industry in Alberta.

Development of Highway 40 is needed for tourism, he said, but government should first look at improving roads to Grande Prairie. A pilot project might be considered to make the Grande Prairie-Grande Cache route a toll highway.

Edmonton Public Forum

Edmonton Hilton Hotel
March 26-27, 1992

Government Panel

Hon. Peter Elzinga (Chair) — Minister of Economic Development and Trade

Hon. Rick Orman — Minister of Energy

Hon. Nancy Betkowski — Minister of Health

Hon. Doug Main — Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism

Mr. Mike Cardinal — MLA, Athabasca-Lac La Biche

Mr. Doug Cherry — MLA, Lloydminster

Mr. Robert Fischer — MLA, Wainwright

Mr. Halvar Jonson — MLA, Ponoka-Rimbey

Mr. Walter Paszkowski — MLA, Smoky River

Summary of Presentations

1. City of Edmonton: Mayor Jan Reimer

Mayor Reimer stressed the need to work together in partnership to build and invest in our educational network. This is essential to upgrade our basic labour force as unskilled jobs disappear and to train specialists to meet the growing demand for high technology skills.

She then presented highlights of the City's 13 action plans designed to support its strategy. Key among them is the need for regional coordination to address crucial problems such as waste management and to market the Edmonton area as a unified business and tourism entity. She suggested the Province should show leadership in encouraging regional integration.

Mayor Reimer said Alberta must stop taking its large urban centres for granted, pointing out the interdependency of "big cities and their coun-

try neighbours." High unemployment and rising social service needs of big cities is the other side of the coin of rural depopulation. The Mayor urged the government to acknowledge the increasing needs of Alberta's cities and to place a high priority on meeting those needs. Citing Edmonton's high unemployment rate and deteriorating infrastructure, she suggested Alberta follow the example of Manitoba, which recently announced a jointly funded public works program with Winnipeg to put people back to work on infrastructure repair. "Urban infrastructure is not a drain on the economy. Rather, it's an investment," she said.

She also cited the upcoming review of the Electrical Energy Marketing Agency as another issue that divides Albertans along traditional lines. She reminded Albertans of the debt they owe the North for its resource royalties and touted the benefits of one-system planning to maximize our resources.

2. University of Alberta: Dr. Paul Davenport

Dr. Davenport made several points regarding the University's role. Highlights include:

1. The University believes access to higher education should be open to all individuals. The existing transfer system is the most cost-efficient approach to access.

2. Alberta's policy-makers must distinguish between research-intensive universities and other institutions of advanced education. The research role of universities is critical to the advancement of any economy. Dr. Davenport cited examples of numerous companies — and jobs — that have been created to transfer technology developed in the University laboratory to the marketplace. He listed several more examples of University research with economic implications, including the basic research which led to commercialization of the Canadian Cold Buster bar and research that resulted in a vaccine for Hepatitis B.

3. The University supports the developing of R&D linkages among the academic, government and private sectors and the government's continued funding for research infrastructure.

4. High-performance telecommunications networks are the superhighways of the future. Alberta is woefully behind in this area, but the University is committed to working with the government in coordinating telecommunications network development.

Mr. Davenport also noted that to best use available resources, Alberta's post-secondary institutions need to identify their strong areas and specialize. Institutions can also do more to collaborate on research.

3. Samson Cree Nation: Roy Louis

Mr. Louis suggested the following ideas to the Alberta government:

- Indian reserves need support in developing their infrastructure. The Province should help design a system which allows the First Nations access to infrastructure financing with charges back to Indian Affairs in Ottawa.

- Financial institutions operating in Alberta could be required to make perhaps 1% of lending funds available for Native business projects, creating a multi-million-dollar pool and spreading the risk.

- There are over 900,000 acres of arable land on reserves but only a tiny fraction is farmed by Indian people. The province could support Indian farmers by requesting the federal government to provide loan guarantees, including Indians on appropriate trade missions, and providing them with information on the latest agricultural technologies.

- The Alberta government should facilitate development of training and hiring programs in the forest industry for Indian people.

- The government must work to raise educational levels of Natives and encourage Native students to look at careers in science, commerce and other professions.

- The government should support the Minister of Tourism in his efforts to market Native culture as a tourist attraction.

- The government should work with industry and First Nations to promote joint ventures for industries on Native lands.

- Alberta Economic Development and Trade should create a unit to provide Native people with information on business basics and opportunities for international trade.

4. Ernst & Young: Gordon Barefoot

Ernst & Young held two public forums for its clients, in Edmonton and Calgary, plus two client focus groups to respond to the Toward 2000 Together initiative. The following are highlights of a survey of their views:

- Government has a role to play in economic development, but a balanced budget is the first priority.

- Businesses should become more directly involved in helping educators develop skills training, and the private sector should spend more money to fund improved training and education.

- The key to economic growth lies in adding value to our resources.

- The government should clarify the composition and purpose of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

A clear theme was that the government's role should be to maintain a positive business climate rather than try to pick winners and losers. Specifically, the government should:

1. produce a clear statement of economic development principles, in effect, an "economic constitution" defining roles and responsibilities of government in this area; and

2. provide more objective information on how the economy is working and whether government policies and programs are getting results.

Specific ideas include:

- Refocus the Heritage Fund on the environment and economic development.

- Refocus other government economic programs to infrastructure and business climate support with tax incentives as the cornerstone.

Government must set an example in productivity improvement. Specifically, government should establish a program to measure the effectiveness of its departments; consider rationalization of certain departments; and develop incentive-based compensation systems for government workers.

5. Fort Saskatchewan Regional Industrial Association: Dennis Maschmeyer

The Association believes we need to focus on the process of quality improvement to become more competitive. Our work force must be educated in the tools of quality and how to apply them in order to improve productivity. Government must set the example by implementing quality within its own workforce. We can no longer afford what amounts to a 25% waste in our economy due to non-productivity.

This focus on the quality improvement process will involve no less than a cultural change, and all sectors must be prepared to work together effectively to make that change.

6. Canadian Federation of Independent Business: Doug Wright

The Federation's survey of its members indicated that some 76% feel there is an inadequate balance in the government's economic development strategy. The effectiveness of government's efforts have eroded recently with its increased hands-on involvement in the economy.

Mr. Wright said there are about 100,000 small businesses in Alberta — among them about 15,000 are starting up and 15,000 expanding each year. The government's strategy should be to enhance the success of those 30,000 new business initiatives. What has really fuelled diversification in the province so far is a favourable business climate, such as low relative taxation. This favourable climate is more important than targeted economic development strategies.

The Federation's recommendations are that the government keep a low profile and concentrate, for example, on:

- providing sustained action to lever business development across the economy;
- providing more information;
- acting as broker; and
- enabling community-based financing initiatives.

7. County of Strathcona: Elmer Haas

Alberta's economic future depends on a strategy of diversification, and we should look first at the diversification potential of the province's base industries.

Our economic future depends on an educated, trained work force. We cannot continue to tolerate a brain drain from Alberta. We must focus on encouraging cottage industries, recognize their job-creating potential and help them "leave the nest" when they're ready to grow by providing small business incubators.

8. Edmonton Economic Development Authority: Ken Pilip, Bob Rosen, and Doug Clement

Mr. Pilip began with the general comment that the Authority believes government should "support wealth creation before distributing wealth." Existing companies must be encouraged to upgrade and diversify into value-added production.

Mr. Clement said the Alberta government's diversification efforts in recent years have yielded results, particularly in the area of R&D. For the future knowledge-based economy we need a stronger alliance among industry, labour, government and academia. Alberta should concentrate in the future on exporting knowledge rather than physical products.

The Authority recommends that the government, among other things:

- identify its economic development investments that yield the greatest results and concentrate on them;
- provide more infrastructure support;
- maintain a competitive taxation system;
- provide more information on opportunities in Alberta for foreign investment;
- target education spending at the needs of the marketplace;
- provide more support for Edmonton in its global promotions;

- increase total investment in R&D, perhaps through matching funds; and
- streamline its bureaucracy so as not to impede investment.

9. Morinville Economic Development Board: Bea Fricson and Rena Bland

Environmental protection should be a cornerstone of our new economic development strategy. Restrictions should be put on the forestry, mining, and oil and gas industries to ensure a clean, lasting landscape. New environmental technologies may offer economic diversification opportunities.

Government should set the standards for education, determine key areas for improvement, and support private industry initiatives for worker training.

Government should stop providing financial incentives for companies to locate in rural areas. This has not worked. Instead, the government should encourage community development from within. Government support should take the form of intelligence gathering, infrastructure development and seed funding programs, such as Business Initiatives for Alberta Communities program.

Business will be attracted to the province by a positive investment climate, fair tax burden and heightened quality of life for its workforce.

10. Alberta Construction Association: Merv Ellis, Larry Kehoe

Specific points in the Association's brief are as follows.

- Government's first priority should be to encourage private sector investment. This requires a thorough review of legislation and regulations that impact on business cost. Roadblocks to development approvals must be removed and the process streamlined. A case in point is the Natural Resources Conservation Act, which provides for intervenor funding by the potential developer. Alberta needs one central agency responsible for development approval. The current process causes a drain on business and discourages investment.
- Government should encourage risk-taking through tax incentive programs, but let the marketplace pick the winners and losers. Financial support by government should take the form of infrastructure development.
- Government can help Alberta business become globally competitive by helping to eliminate regional and inter-provincial trade barriers.
- Government should maintain its free-enterprise philosophy and resist socialistic trends.

11. Alberta Teachers' Association: Frances Savage

The Association addressed the issues of education and labour from the Toward 2000 Together document.

With respect to education:

- Schools should not become "little factories for the production of workers." There has to be a broader context.
- It's almost impossible to predict which skills will be needed 12 years from now, so we should concentrate more on general rather than specific skills.

The Association believes we should not treat labour as a commodity, but must look at what workers hope for themselves. Labour and business need to work together to define goals and to accomplish those goals. Specifically:

- Schools and business can work together to help develop the new kinds of skills workers will need in the future.
- The Association is interested in helping to reduce management/labour conflicts.
- Government should promote minimum wage standards that maintain quality of life for workers.
- Strategies must be found to give employees direct input into decision-making.

12. Canadian Dehydrators' Association: Bryan Davidson

The industry is a growth sector in agriculture and exports pellets and cubes into Japan and other Pacific Rim countries. These markets offer opportunities for even more growth in the future.

Yet the industry does not get the recognition it wants and deserves. In fact, it was not even mentioned in the government's "Freedom to Choose" document among value-added industries, and the industry is not included in numerous government farm support programs.

With respect to needed change, there should be more exchange between the public and private sector.

13. Alberta Motion Picture Industry Association: Bruce Harvey

The motion picture industry is a good diversification industry because it:

- has an impact on tourism;
- creates a big ripple effect on the economy;
- is environmentally friendly;

- uses a highly skilled labour force; and
- is an equal opportunity industry with respect to gender.

Alberta's share of the Canadian film industry is not representative of its share of the population or its contribution to the national economy.

Alberta can raise money for the film industry apart from personal taxes by:

1. taxing funds gained by foreign distributors through access to the Alberta market (every province except Alberta imposes a tax on theatre revenues); and
2. encouraging private investment through capital cost allowance.

Other suggestions:

The Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation (the first of its kind in Canada), should have its funding renewed annually, so it can be free to take more calculated risks when selecting films for equity investment.

ACCESS should take the Channel 4 (England) approach, i.e. stop doing its own production and move its money into independent production.

14. Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta: Steve Allan, Cam Crawford, and Steve Glover

The Institute believes Alberta's natural resources will not guarantee our economic future. One of our biggest assets is our people and their skills.

Government's role should be to act as facilitator rather than intervenor. Government should concentrate on:

- education and training;
- public safety;
- maintenance of an effective social safety net;
- development of public infrastructure;
- providing information;
- protecting the environment; and
- maintaining a competitive business environment.

The only legitimate fiscal option for government is to cut spending and reduce the cost of government. With more realistic financial reporting, government must show Albertans the necessity of reducing their expectations of government.

Alberta should pursue value-added production in its resource industries and should not attempt to "buy" new businesses unless they fit into our strengths.

15. Lamont/Two Hills Business Development Centre: Frank Simon

Mr. Simon reported the results of the Lamont/Two Hills Area's recent economic development assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses are so numerous, mere survival is in question:

- the population is declining rapidly;
- the commercial sector is weak and there is significant trade leakage;
- improved roads in the area have only served to make the small centres satellites to the larger centres;
- disposable incomes are low;
- there is little diversification;
- the population is aging and 40% have less than a Grade 9 education; and
- houses that were built for $80,000 in the late '70s are vacant and being offered for under $40,000.

Mr. Simon said the government can help in offsetting the area's two biggest weaknesses: aging population and low education level. The government could look at developing ethanol and food processing industries in the area. It could also provide adult education to upgrade the technological skill levels in the population.

16. Alberta Real Estate Association: Les Philips

The Association's submission is the result of a province-wide survey of its more than 8,000 members. Highlights include:

- A balanced budget is a must.
- Bureaucracy at the executive level of government should be downsized and departments merged for greater efficiency.
- Alberta should lead in working toward eliminating inter-provincial trade barriers.
- Advanced education should be more available, based on industry needs. There should be a closer relationship between education and industry and more emphasis placed on on-the-job training.
- Schools should operate year-round.

- Government should provide more business counselling and direct its efforts at retaining existing businesses and enhancing value-added industries. The corporate tax system should be simplified.

- Government should continue, even accelerate, the privatization process.

- Consideration should be given to disposing of excess government lands and a central department should be established for all government acquisitions and disposals.

- Government should not be in competition with private industry. Mr. Paszkowski said he agrees with the concept of a 12-month school year. Millions of dollars of assets lie unused for too long under the current system.

17. Federation of Alberta Naturalists: Carol Smith

The Federation believes Alberta's economic strategies must steer a distinct course for a sustainable and self-sufficient economy that will ensure biodiversity and contribute to Albertans' quality of life.

Our inherited human-centred value system treats the Earth as a "resource pie to be divided up among us" and ignores the fact that humans are part of Earth's ecosphere.

Land use planning must be based on preserving biodiversity. Current reforestation practices, for instance, are not sufficient because they do not reconstitute forestland ecosystems in their original complexity.

Technology drives the way land is used and changes the face of the earth ever more drastically — all for one taken-for-granted agenda: to make life increasingly easier and more comfortable for people. We cannot continue to exploit the Earth from a single-species viewpoint.

18. Stony Plain Economic Development Board: Barrie Day

Companies ready to move into global marketplaces require provincial assistance in developing processes that will help them grow. This means government may need to restructure its assistance programs and develop its own talent banks to meet these needs. Stony Plain wants to form a partnership with the provincial government to assist the process of growth from within.

19. Athabasca Regional Economic Development Association: Edwina Bobocel

AREDA held a public workshop in response to the Toward 2000 Together document. Based on the concerns identified in the workshop, AREDA believes the government should:

- define its role as that of facilitator to business and industry and not be directly involved in management and financing of industry;

- focus on creating a positive business climate;
- develop the infrastructure that will allow the economy to build;
- promote existing strengths and expansion of existing businesses;
- establish a tax regime that will attract investment to Alberta while maintaining an acceptable level of social services; and
- seek to improve work force skills by ensuring continued training opportunities to meet industry's needs.

20. Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Alberta Division: Bob Saari

The manufacturing sector faces a number of problems in Alberta, including:

- Alberta is the only province in Canada with a machinery and equipment tax at the municipal level.
- Property tax rates are 2 1/2 to 3 times higher than in Ontario and Quebec.
- Lack of government competitiveness.
- High input taxes.
- Electrical Energy Marketing Agency and increased electrical energy costs.

Highlights of the Association's recommendations include:

- Replace the machinery and equipment tax with a broadly based business tax and/or sales tax, and make other changes to the tax structure to make Alberta manufacturers more competitive.
- De-regulate natural gas prices, consider de-regulating electrical power, and re-institute the electrical power cost advantage for manufacturers.
- Work with industry and educators to improve the image of "blue collar" work.
- Develop a manufacturing strategy.
- Reduce government by at least one third.

21. Canadian Chemical Producers Association: Art LeNeveu and Vern Mogensen

The Association believes:

- The government must provide a more competitive business environment and continue its current diversification strategy, ensuring that engines of growth like the chemical industry can continue to

expand. The government must also balance the budget, let Albertans know their demands on government must be reasonable, avoid subsidies to industry, and reduce the current high level of transfers to business.

- Government must take a market-based approach to economic development, letting the market pick the winners and losers. Government's role is to provide a competitive tax regime, invest in human resources, develop infrastructure and stimulate capital markets.

- Environmental protection must continue to be accorded a high priority but the Association does not agree with the option to "go slow" on economic development unless a new project can be "proven safe." Instead the CCPA's Responsible Care manufacturing code — by which member companies adopt internal environmental goals and performance standards — should be a model for all industries. Environmental regulatory requirements should be harmonized within Canada and internationally.

22. City of St. Albert, Economic Development Advisory Board: Paul Chalifoux, Bruce Randall, and Ray Gibbon

The Board's key recommendations are as follows.

- The government's economic development policy should concentrate on counselling and providing market intelligence, with less emphasis on loans, grants and loan guarantees.

- The private sector should be encouraged to play a larger role in further education and skills training.

- The provincial and federal governments should be accountable for setting and enforcing environmental protection standards. The corporate sector should take responsibility for its impact on the environment.

- The government should concentrate its economic development focus on selling Alberta in the global and national marketplace and should provide local communities with the tools they need to undertake their own local business initiatives.

- To remain competitive in R&D, high technology, manufacturing and service industries, the government must provide a level playing field, matching support levels provided by other jurisdictions. The government should provide a modest incentive to encourage private sector involvement in R&D.

- The government should provide more accurate information on Heritage Savings Trust Fund investments and maintain the fund with strong fiscal management policies in order to maintain lower taxes in Alberta.

- More effort should be made to encourage higher value-added to Alberta resource industries.
- The Business Incubator Program should be continued.
- The tourism strategy should include more balance in tourism development between northern and southern Alberta, provision of training programs and emphasis on return visits.

23. Private Citizen: Tom Eger

Government must, among other things:

- Reflect free enterprise principles in its economic development strategy, be more selective and eliminate the risk to the taxpayers. Abandon corporate welfare and politically motivated economic decisions.
- Focus on smaller businesses and the creation of a more attractive tax and investment climate.
- Work with business and education to develop competitive and motivated workers. Encourage industry to participate financially in education and training as an investment.
- Not compete with industry, but help businesses succeed by providing marketing and development programs, infrastructure and fair and effective regulation.
- Set a strong fiscal example from within. Balance the budget.
- Play a strong role in environmental regulation and enforcement, even if it means the loss of jobs.

24. Sherwood Park & District Chamber of Commerce: Ace Cetinski

To encourage investment of equity capital, Mr. Cetinski proposed a Small Business Equity Capital Tax Incentive (SBECTI) with the following features:

- Investors would purchase special investee company SBECTI shares with a minimum of $1,000 and maximum of $500,000.
- The shares would be purchased directly by individual Albertans or Alberta corporations, who would receive SBECTI receipts similar to RRSP receipts.
- The investor would receive a tax credit of 30% on the investment, refundable to the government if the share is sold within a short time period.
- Investment proceeds must not be used for lending, foreign investment or non-active business investment.

- A registry of investors and small businesses requiring equity capital would be maintained.

This program would create jobs while keeping government involvement to a minimum.

25. Urban Core Support Network: Sherry McKibben, Jim Spinelli

The presenters focused on community economic development with emphasis on inner city communities but pointed out that their concepts could be applied equally to small disadvantaged rural communities. They stressed that any economic development strategy must take the disadvantaged into account.

The first goal of community economic development (CED) is to provide jobs within the community using existing resources and skills. Focus must be on creating quality, long-term jobs, and those jobs should be "green." Planning of a community economic development initiative must involve all members of the community.

A CED initiative may require external funding especially in the early stages. But, the cost should be seen as an investment, since funding already goes to the inner city in the form of a social safety net.

Finally, community economic development ensures that the businesses and people involved have a stake in the community.

26. Edmonton Research Park: Glenn Mitchell

Mr. Mitchell's submission addressed questions from the Toward 2000 Together document and made the following points:

- The government must ask itself not what portion of the budget should be spent on economic diversification, but how much spending should be directed to perpetuating the past and present (agricultural subsidies, drilling incentives, social service spending) as opposed to adapting to and creating the future (education, research, infrastructure, holistic health care).

- Government's role should be to lead, communicate vision, and evaluate future trends. Government should make fewer direct financial investments in businesses and provide broadly based investment incentives, such as lower corporate taxes.

- Industry should expand its participation in education, both in funding and consulting on future needs. Government should promote alternative forms of post-secondary education, especially non-university. Skills upgrading must be life-long and fully supported by government, employers and the tax system.

- With respect to the priority placed on environmental protection, we should aim for developing leading edge technologies which minimize environmental impact and which can be exported and, we

should adopt a life-cycle approach to projects, complete with phase-out plans.

- Alberta must concentrate on attracting and supporting development of more research-based enterprises, especially through support of a new generation of technology entrepreneurs.
- The government must choose to be in the forefront of certain industries in which we already have strategic advantage, e.g. medical biotechnology, telecommunications, natural resources.

27. Banff National Park: Jan Bloomfield

National parks have played a major role in the development of tourism in Alberta. Research shows that national parks, forests and undisturbed nature influence the choice of vacation destination for 40% of U.S. visitors. The tourism industry in Alberta is based primarily on the attractiveness of its protected areas, therefore Alberta should establish additional parks or protected areas to increase its tourism attractiveness and help achieve Canada's Green Plan goal of protecting 12% of its land area.

The concept of "sustainable tourism" needs to be given more consideration in Alberta's economic planning. This means protecting for future generations the resources on which tourism opportunities are based. The Canadian Parks Service and the tourism industry must work together to ensure long-term sustainability of tourism in the province.

28. KenAgra Management Services Ltd.: Ken Stickland

Mr. Stickland said he sees signs of a "Maritimes Fisheries logic" making inroads into rural Alberta in terms of increasing economic dependence as opposed to self-sufficiency. He objects to the "doomsday scenario" painted by the media about rural Alberta. He feels rural Alberta is still vibrant.

He offered the following ideas:

- Business must take more responsibility for manpower training, investing both time and money in training.
- Telecommunications must be put to work more effectively to provide distance education to rural Albertans.
- Instead of a prairie orientation, Alberta should take a Pacific-Northwest point of view with respect to agriculture.
- Our agricultural future lies with oil seeds and feed grains, the beef and hog industries, and processing.

29. Book Publishers' Association of Alberta: Dennis Johnson

The BPA believes a strong book publishing industry is essential to a healthy economic and cultural future for Alberta. Up to 70% of all new

white-collar jobs being created are related to researching, writing and dissemination of information. Therefore, publishing must be in the forefront of the plan for Alberta's economic future.

In addition to its primary economic role, the book publishing industry plays an important supporting role in other areas of the economy such as tourism and trade by portraying the richness of Alberta's identity to people beyond our borders. A country or community will be more likely to engage in business with another when its people feel fa..iliar with that society.

The industry will also have an enormous role to play in providing the learning materials for the education of the highly skilled people who will be crucial to Alberta's future.

30. Edmonton Recycling Society and Recycling Council of Alberta: Cornelius Gunter

Mr. Gunter urged the government to look at privatizing the regulatory processes involving issuance of permits, environmental impact assessments and the governmental review process. A model for this would be the current system for certification of medical practitioners and health care facilities in Alberta. Regulatory activities would be carried out by certified engineers or firms whose work would be monitored by government agencies. This approach would ensure that time is of the essence in the regulatory process, and industry would be able to determine at the outset the type of review required and plan accordingly for the time and cost involved.

Mr. Gunter recommended that a Ministerial Round Table on Recycling be established. The Round Table would be private sector oriented and function as an independent advisory body representing all interests and providing a consensus for legislative/policy change. Mr. Gunter cited global developments that will place more stringent environmental standards on suppliers of goods and services and present new opportunities and challenges to Alberta businesses in environmental areas. Alberta already is a leader in some of these areas. The Round Table would be proactive, stimulating economic growth and industrial development while addressing the environmental concerns of the day. It would encourage partnerships among government, industry and various labour and community groups to focus on greater efficiency and more creative use of all resources.

31. Securities Marketplace Group: Bill Smith

Mr. Smith reported on recommendations by one of two committees formed at a meeting of industry and government leaders held last November to discuss the Future of Alberta's Securities Marketplace.

The committee proposed:

- A Western Equity Fund: a privately managed equity fund targeted at small and intermediate Western-based companies. The role of government would be to provide some seed capital to get the fund started.

- Alberta Equity Incentive Program: a tax-based incentive program aimed at fostering investment in emerging Alberta companies. Viable incentive programs might include Alberta Universities Investments for R&D, Alberta Technology Program and Alberta Venture Program, each involving practical support for a particular sector or for emerging companies generally.

- Western Commodities Exchange: It is surprising that there is no local commodities exchange, given the prominent position of Alberta in the production of agricultural products and natural resources. The support of government and local business leaders could bring this concept into reality.

- Increased Investor Information Initiatives: While a variety of information delivery systems are already in place, additional information about investment opportunities in Alberta and capital markets is needed to stimulate investment. An example: investor education programs sponsored by parties such as the Alberta Stock Exchange or Investment Dealers' Association.

32. Alberta Chamber of Resources: Don Currie, Lou Hyndman, and Dr. Erdal Yildirim

The Chamber commends the suggested vision for Alberta's economy contained in the Toward 2000 Together document but recommends that the words "resource-based" be used to describe the nature of the envisioned internationally competitive economy.

The following beliefs should be the foundation for achieving Alberta's vision:

- Responsible development and upgrading of resources represent significant opportunities for Albertans.

- We must build on existing strengths, including a highly skilled work force and infrastructure. Resource development provides a natural foundation for economic diversification.

- Business should be the key player in the marketplace, endorsed and supported by government.

- Economic development and environmental considerations must be integrated. Government can help by bringing together opposing groups on this issue.

- Government and industry must become globally competitive through innovation, continuous improvement, productivity growth, and providing products that meet marketplace demands.

- Revenue should come primarily from personal and corporate taxes, without heavy reliance on royalties.

The role of government should be to create a competitive economic climate through effective regulations and taxation and by removing impediments to a free marketplace. The role of business is to invest and operate profitably in a globally competitive environment and to provide leadership in R&D. Business, government, university and research institutions should collaborate on developing R&D priorities.

33. Alberta Industrial Property Taxpayers Group: Mel Coutanche

This presentation addressed the following issues.

- Responsiveness: Responsiveness and flexibility are needed to survive globally. The political process works too slowly for the economic realities of the '90s. The government must act now, not wait for the year 2000.
- Role of government: Government must create the business climate for wealth generation, provide infrastructure, and promote the concept of "affordable" with respect to social programs as opposed to the concept of "entitlement."
- Human resource development: Skills required in the workforce change several times in a lifetime. We must modify the curriculum to prepare students for real life by including total quality principles, concepts of basic finance, and wealth generation principles as opposed to wealth consumption.
- Regional development: Development must be viable on its own merits.
- Research and Development: Alberta is not large enough to support significant R&D efforts. We should expand in areas in which we already have expertise. Applied research should be market driven and have business sector sponsors and commercial feasibility.

34. Alberta Chamber of Commerce: Darren Reeder

Mr. Reeder prefaced his presentation with the comment that any economic development planning process must start with an across-the-board examination of public sector services. More efficient delivery of government services will help the economy become more competitive.

Mr. Reeder focused on four key areas:

- Interprovincial trade barriers: The Alberta government must take a lead role in dismantling the current trade barriers, including the multi-level licensing requirements affecting labour and industry groups.

- Fiscal responsibility and the government's role: Get the provincial deficit under control. Government's role is to create the right environment for business to compete, not to provide incentives to attract new business. Grass roots business people are saying what they need from the government is information and skills, not money. The Chamber recommends that the government review all its incentive programs, including loan guarantees, and get rid of the ones that are not cost effective.

- Privatization: Government is in direct competition with the private sector in some key areas, including public works and parks and recreation projects. We can cut costs and improve efficiency by contracting some services out to the private sector. The government should work with the private sector to develop criteria to determine when privatization should be considered. All Crown corporations should have a sunset clause.

- Taxation: The current system is too complex and inefficient, particularly for small businesses. The cost of compliance is too high. The Chamber recommends eliminating the tax on small business and replacing it with a more progressive tax regime.

35. Edmonton Chamber of Commerce: John Knebel, Dianne Keefe

Mr. Knebel pointed out that resource revenues will not recover in the next decade and our future prosperity depends on a knowledge-based economy.

Ms. Keefe presented the Chamber's brief, which addressed several options Albertans must consider.

- It will be difficult to control spending on social programs. User fees should be considered.

- The Chamber perceives an "interventionist tone" in the Toward 2000 Together document. The government should focus on providing an attractive business climate and the infrastructure essential to economic development. Programs should focus on export development. The Alberta Treasury Branches and Alberta Opportunity Company should be considered for privatization.

- The Chamber recognizes the need for a well-educated work force. The private sector must accept some responsibility for training and retraining with the encouragement of tax incentives. Post-secondary institutions should be allowed to set tuition fees to at least 20% of total operating costs. Government should work with business to develop relevant school curricula.

- The Chamber supports the concept of sustainable development. Where environmental protection conflicts with economic development, environment should be the priority. Industry should be

encouraged through R&D tax credits to seek advancements in environmental products and services.

- The government should provide infrastructure and tax credits to lever private sector R&D initiatives.
- The government should commit Alberta to be in the forefront of high tech industries, but its involvement should be limited to providing R&D infrastructure, education and training, and export promotion, not direct financial assistance for the high tech community.
- The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund should be used as a stable source of government revenue, not for economic development.

36. Forum for Action on Workplace Health and Safety: Larry Odegard and Vincent Fabian

The Forum recommends that Alberta's economic strategy incorporate principles recognizing that protection of worker health is a core element of Alberta's way of doing business and that safety is an essential work skill. Some recommendations:

- Safety should be part of the core curriculum for all training programs.
- Safety should be introduced to all students before they leave high school.
- All bids by subcontractors must demonstrate measures to protect worker health and safety.
- Impact on workers must be part of all economic and environmental impact assessments and safety must be part of workplace design.

The government should provide leadership by endorsing safe work as an Alberta value, giving it a place in Alberta's economic strategy, and providing an example. Specifically government should:

- make a long-term commitment to the Occupational Health and Safety Heritage Grant Program;
- require all government suppliers and organizations that receive government operating grants to demonstrate measures to protect worker health and safety; and
- include workplace heath and safety as a component of management assistance provided to small business.

37. Metro Edmonton Economic Development Team: John Barnard

The presentation addressed, among other things, the following issues.

- Diversification: Initiatives should be focused on "sunrise" business and industry, specifically advanced technology and knowledge-based industries.
- Job creation: Government should not "buy jobs." Rather, government should encourage growth of locally generated businesses.
- Education and training: Educational institutions, government, industry and the individual should work in partnership to develop a globally competitive work force.
- Environment: There can be no compromise. We must ensure that our environment is fully protected. Environmental industries offer an excellent opportunity to diversify our economy.
- Urban/rural development: The focus must be directed to areas that can provide the critical mass to generate meaningful economic activity. We cannot afford to direct resources to communities which have little potential for increasing the GDP of the province.

38. Alberta Home Builders' Association: Dennis Little

The housing industry will play a vital role in the future economic growth of the province. The industry's structure is generally small and entrepreneurial and it places a high priority on flexibility.

The Association feels:

- The root cause of the government's current budgetary problems is a "protectionist philosophy" which ignores personal responsibility in favour of "inappropriate legislation, rules and regulations." We should reduce the cost of our legislative infrastructure as a major way to help our industries become more globally competitive.
- It is time to review the Planning Act, which delegates responsibility for administration of the act to municipalities, and find ways to provide a more workable legislative environment that balances the need for public input with the industry's need to be able to plan with an element of certainty.
- The industry is suffering from a lack of skilled trades people. We need to create an attitude that a highly skilled technical career is a valuable commodity and to provide training opportunities at all levels of the educational system.
- We should look at Alberta-developed housing technology as an exportable product.

39. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology: Dr. S.G. Souch

To be competitive Alberta needs a highly skilled technical workforce. "We're in a horse race and the province has to back the winners. If we want to maintain our social programs ... wealth-generating career training must be given priority."

NAIT reaffirmed its commitment to cooperating with government and industry in achieving the province's economic development goals.

NAIT, together with SAIT, trains more than three-quarters of Alberta's apprentices and four out of every five engineering technologists. NAIT's unique capacities are focused on wealth-generating occupations, such as engineering and science-based technology, and trades.

NAIT is the largest technical institute in Canada and Alberta's largest non-university institution. The government should back NAIT because the critical mass is in technical education. Economic progress in the year 2000 will depend on a superior technical infrastructure.

40. Alberta Plastics Recycling Association: Gary Horan

The Association was incorporated to develop a plastics collecting, resorting and reprocessing infrastructure that will make Alberta a model for effective plastics waste management and recycling.

The Association works with entrepreneurs, government and strategic partners to achieve solutions. One solution it proposes is a Super Fund: 40% to provide

low-interest loans or loan guarantees because reprocessing technology is expensive; 40% to establish recycling programs in the form of grants to municipalities; 10% for a provincial centre for waste reduction and recycling; and 10% for an office of waste minimization and recycling.

41. Van Horne Institute for International Transportation and Regulatory Affairs: Merrienne Duncan

The Institute held a forum to provide input to the Toward 2000 Together process. Some of the recommendations were as follows.

- Simplifying and harmonizing regulations and eliminating duplication to create a level playing field. While regulations across Canada are harmonized, implementation varies.
- Creating a level playing field in taxation. Tax burden differentials from north to south hamper competitiveness of the Canadian transportation industry.
- Productivity improvements through better labour-management relations and restrictions on asset rationalization to lower cost of transport.

- Changes in federal transportation legislation — specifically the Western Grain Transportation Act and the West Coast Ports Act — would reflect acceptance of the reality of international competition.
- Infrastructure renewal should have priority over new infrastructure.
- The burden of compliance with environmental regulations should be reduced through harmonizing and rationalizing.
- Safety could be self-policed, because it is in the industry's best interests.
- Transportation R&D would benefit Alberta business and provide an exportable commodity.
- Tourism marketing should use electronic information systems to support a seamless transportation system. As businesses economize on time by using electronic communications, tourists become the primary travellers.
- Innovative financing is required to reduce the taxation burden and still provide improved transportation systems.

A common theme through all recommendations was a stress on a partnership approach rather than a confrontational approach.

42. Edmonton Friends of the North: Lorraine Vetsch

Some of the major recommendations of the Group are as follows.

- A full analysis of the cradle-to-grave costs of a diversification strategy must be done before it is put into effect.
- Diversification strategies must have independent third party scientific assessment with full-blown public hearings with access to intervenor funding and information.
- Sustainable development must be defined to mean: economic decisions must be environmentally sound; government policies must anticipate and prevent environmental damage; polluters must pay for environmental harm; citizens have the right to participate in decision making without having to prove they are directly affected.
- Human health must be protected.
- Diversification activities must not violate existing government policies or degrade the environment around disputed Native land claim areas.
- Diversification must not advance if it destroys other industries, such as tourism and recreation.
- There should be no loan guarantees to companies that take value-added production out of Alberta.

- There should be no more investment in "dinosaur technologies. No one wants bleached kraft pulp any more."

43. Canadian Organization of Small Business: Don Eastcott

Mr. Eastcott made the following points:

- There is a need for an intelligence system in Alberta to let people know what is going on in the rest of the world. Albertans have a poor understanding of how things work in the global marketplace.
- There is too much emphasis on government doing things for us. There should be more of a partnership with emphasis on the competitive enterprise sector.
- The basis of all economies is small enterprise, and probably manufacturing enterprise. Alberta is now incredibly well-positioned to move into knowledge-based enterprise.
- On behalf of the Canadian Business Innovation Centre, Mr. Eastcott pointed out there is a need to understand the role of incubators and to provide additional assistance at a second level when businesses are ready to move out on their own.
- Canada per capita is the best utilizer of dollars spent on training and R&D, but unfortunately we export our technology and brains and get nothing in return.
- The organization is concerned about encroachment of government into the private sector. For instance, hospitals are now sending out their instrument technicians to do work that could be done by the private sector.

44. Private Citizen: Doug Pruden

Mr. Pruden focused on ways to reduce the dropout rate and crime committed by youth. The economic costs of a 30% dropout rate and consequent high crime rate are great.

Mr. Pruden recommended:

- Youth should be rewarded for good behaviour. For instance, money saved in vandalism costs could be reallocated to provide rewards.
- Government must become approachable by young people.
- Educators must work with other agencies to do what it takes to make young people more productive members of society. Education must become an "experience."
- Parents must become more involved with schools.

45. Grant MacEwan Community College: Dr. Gerald Kelly

The economic health of a region is the degree to which it can develop the potential of its people.

Education is at the core of an information-based economy.

The major issue is how will we pay for post-secondary education? The Grant MacEwan model sees the first and second years as primarily government funded. A partnership of the individual, industry and government would develop a work/study pattern for the third and fourth years and life-long learning.

To promote quality work environments, we should look around the world to see where the most productive labour forces are. We need to involve people in how organizations are run in order to benefit from their full potential.

Colleges must expose students to entrepreneurial skills in order to help build an entrepreneurial culture.

46. Private Citizen: Bruce Matichuk

Mr. Matichuk said Alberta has a "technology problem." There needs to be a change of attitude at a more basic level if we are to be competitive. But only industries which can adapt technology and change with the times will be competitive.

We need to develop an Alberta-wide information network comparable to the electronic "superhighways" being developed in the U.S. We need to develop a multi-media system that, through a TV camera, will put in the hands of every Albertan a computer without their having to purchase one.

There needs to be a cross-section of industry, government and education to formulate government policy and provide the complex information industries need to make decisions about future direction.

Government's role is to encourage collaboration through consortiums. Education must be privatized and personalized to give people their choice of education when and where they need it. There must be a commitment to delivery of education to every Albertan through the phone system.

V.

Summary of Additional Submissions and Briefs

This section presents short extracts of additional submissions and briefs which were forwarded to the Alberta government. It is intended only to provide a sampling of some of the ideas presented in each of these submissions. For further information, please contact the individual or group responsible for preparing the submission.

ACTC Technologies Inc., R. E. George

We encourage the provincial government, the post-secondary and secondary educational institutions, and the numerous other levels of government in Alberta, to clearly identify science and technology, in particular information technology, as a province-wide enabling and strategically important industry which will diversify the economy by the year 2000.

To ensure success of this strategy, there must be province-wide agreement that a high priority will be placed on producing highly qualified university graduates to meet the critical needs of industry. Recommended are: (a) financial support for a province-wide implementation of cooperative programs in science, engineering and management; and (b) establishment of university-based multidisciplinary centres of excellence in software engineering.

To stimulate corporate research and development, the provincial government is urged to:

- revise the provincial tax system to encourage Alberta-based R&D;
- implement a research and development fund to match industry-supported research and development funding;
- support increases in industry-led joint venture R&D undertaken by organizations such as the Alberta Research Council and the Telecommunications Research Centre; and
- provide further support for organizations such as the Calgary Research and Development Authority.

The Alberta government is also urged to use its normal purchasing requirements to encourage Alberta-based companies to do research and development.

Alberta Aerospace Association

One ingredient missing from the government discussion document is that facilitation is required to increase research efforts. This is a proactive facilitation function that seeks new technologies, finds participants, establishes relationships and provides planning assistance. We would like to see government create a commercially oriented agency staffed by experienced business and research personnel and chartered to identify feasible technologies, bring the various agencies together, and establish the guidelines and plans.

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

We support the view that fostering entrepreneurial skills is crucial to Alberta's continued prosperity and that all regions of the province have a realistic potential to achieve economic success.

Economic development and diversification activities must be given a higher priority in Alberta's overall public policy.

We believe the provincial government should focus primarily on ensuring an attractive and competitive business climate in Alberta, while allowing the private sector to act as the "engine" of economic activity.

We believe that industry must make a far greater commitment to the ongoing education and training of its employees.

Community development must be initiated and led by the community itself. We believe the Alberta government should see that local communities have the necessary resources to do this by improving local infrastructure, offering counselling, advisory and information services, or providing financial assistance to carry out projects identified by the community.

The community bond concept being implemented in Saskatchewan and Manitoba is worth consideration as a vehicle that allows communities to determine their own development priorities and that creates a sense of ownership and control in the local populace.

Our ability as a society to meet the challenge of funding necessary government services at all levels, while ensuring a fair and competitive tax system for business and individuals, will be the key to determining our future economic prospects.

Alberta Energy Company Ltd.

Despite recent diversification, the oil and gas industry has been and will be the "engine of growth" for Alberta. The "engine" is now stalling and losing power. Alberta should reduce its royalty take to ensure the future wellbeing of its most important industry.

Even though environmental awareness is becoming increasingly important, Alberta industry cannot afford new environmental regulations that burden it compared to its national and international competitors.

Alberta Manufacturing Education Council

With the decline in the petroleum and agriculture sectors over the past few years, manufacturing now plays a significant role in Alberta's economic development, growth and prosperity. Our manufacturers are rapidly falling behind other G-7 countries in productivity and competitiveness. One of the most significant factors is the lack of highly skilled employees.

Detailed planning and action are required to close the widening gap between skill levels in Alberta and those in other industrialized countries. Barriers preventing companies from training their personnel must be solved by industry, educators and government working together.

Alberta Microelectronic Centre

Innovation and technology application are an integral part in the ability of Alberta firms to compete in the global marketplace.

Research and development: The foundation of our future economic wealth will be based on the application of technology. It follows that if technology is the foundation of wealth creation, then investment in the technology development process will contribute to the long-term benefit of a society.

Human resource development: The rate of change in society places a great deal of pressure on the educational system to adapt and respond to the educational needs within our society.

- Technology literacy as a minimum and the opportunity to obtain a strong basic education in science and technology need to become a high priority for our educational system.
- A fundamental change in how education is delivered needs to be evaluated. We need to become more cost-effective by using teaching aids that incorporate advanced technology principles.
- To identify specific types of skilled workers that will be required is too exacting. We believe it is more appropriate to concentrate on the fundamental skills in science and technology. With a sound fundamental grounding, and an improved school guidance system, individuals can make more reasoned choices as to personal preferences and careers.
- The concept of life-long learning needs to become part of our culture. Mechanisms for adult training need to be developed that will help individual employers provide quality employee upgrading programs while controlling costs.

Technology adoption and application: Technology adoption is the commercialization of R&D.

- We need first to develop educational/informational programs that lead to our society adopting a technology culture.
- Individual firms today need to be given encouragement to incorporate appropriate technologies into their firms.
- The inclusion of technology that will improve the effectiveness of a firm can be further advanced by selective tax incentives.
- The formation of new enterprises that are adopting new technology is a key ingredient in developing the long-term technology culture that we need.

Collaborative efforts: Competitiveness grows from partnerships. We need to learn how to cooperate in order to compete. Government needs to encourage collaborative research. Real and perceived barriers may exist that prevent individual firms from even considering such an approach.

Management and marketing skills: Skilled people are the key to success for any organization. Management and marketing skills needs are often poorly understood by smaller or entrepreneurial companies, yet it is these functions that are so critical for the survival of an enterprise. Organizations within themselves need to come to grips with their needs in this area.

Alberta Parents for Ukrainian Education Society

The future growth of the Alberta economy will depend on diversification and the cultivation of international markets. To compete successfully in today's and tomorrow's global village, Alberta requires a well educated, highly skilled work force capable of communicating efficiently in a plethora of multilingual societies.

Bilingual programs in the Alberta Public School system currently offer Ukrainian, Mandarin, German, Hebrew, Arabic and Polish to students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. In most school districts, French is offered at the Grade 4 level. In effect, the students are learning three languages. These programs are more cost-effective than adult education. The community support backing the programs allows the students to have a milieu in which they can use their language skills.

In order for these programs to become excellent language and culture learning programs, they require quality resources and qualified teachers — both in the target language and in language instruction methodology. It is also important that business and government create an environment to encourage our students to take languages and thereby become a resource allowing Alberta to become more competitive in the world economy.

Alberta Pharmaceutical Association

We recommend that government establish a system of health care user fees and introduce a professional fee structure for pharmacists that would allow them to provide more extensive diagnostic and monitoring services. Government is also urged to increase spending on preventive health care (which promises long-term gain in exchange for increased short-term costs), introduce smart card technology to the health care field, and provide social assistance recipients with increased opportunities to upgrade their education, participate in community make-work projects and build self-esteem.

Government should continue to maintain an attractive business and investment climate and a level playing field for small business and the corporate sector.

While government should provide opportunities for skills development and/or upgrading, the onus for education or re-education must be on the individual.

Heritage Trust Fund assets should be slowly liquidated to maximize their potential, with the resulting funds used as capital to institute a technologically advanced health care system.

Alberta Round Table on Environment and Economy

The Round Table is a group of Albertans from different segments of society selected by Cabinet in May 1990 to provide leadership, policy advice and long-term strategies for sustainable development to government, business and the general public.

The following are excerpts from the Round Table Report, Alberta: Working for a Sustainable Future.

The Round Table envisions an Alberta which is a member of the global community and is a leader in sustainable development, ensuring a healthy environment, a healthy economy, and a high quality of life in the present and the future.

Our vision encompasses all of the following elements:

- The quality of air, water and land is assured.
- Alberta's biological diversity is preserved.
- We live within Alberta's natural carrying capacity. (Our values and consumption patterns recognize Alberta's true carrying capacity.)
- The economy is healthy.
- Market forces and regulatory systems work for sustainable development. (There are economic incentives to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour.)
- Urban and rural communities offer a healthy environment for living.
- Albertans are educated and informed about the economy and the environment, are responsible global citizens, and are stewards of the environment and the economy.

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)

The AUMA, representing 85% of Alberta's urban municipalities, recognizes the need for long-term fundamental change in the Alberta economy and that diversification and innovation must be pursued to create a broad, dynamic base for the economic structure of the province.

Inter-sector cooperation: By sharing a common vision of Alberta in the 21st century, all orders of government as well as the business, labour and education sectors can achieve a more positive climate conducive to economic development.

Fairer and more responsive fiscal arrangements among the province, municipalities, and school boards are required. The AUMA recommends that the ultimate findings of the Local Government Financing Review be examined carefully in any consideration of inter-sector cooperation. To work effectively together, the roles and responsibilities of the province and municipalities must be clearly defined and responsibilities for funding matched accordingly.

Provincial role: We believe that the key role and responsibility of the government is salesmanship in promoting Alberta's assets and opportunities in the

national and international marketplace. Another role is to assist Albertans in identifying entrepreneurial opportunities beyond our borders and to assist in making connections to market products and services.

Finally, we believe the province has a role to play in providing both financial and non-financial support programs to municipalities, industries, businesses and individuals to help them establish and expand businesses and develop local economies.

Encouraging new development: Provincial government assistance to business and industry should favour educational programs. Removal of barriers to business such as undue government intervention and burdensome regulations will enhance the environment for new development. Direct financial support to individual businesses should be discontinued. If financial incentives are to be offered, they should be available only on an industry-wide basis.

AUMA supports a realistic and competitive tax and investment climate but notes it must be balanced with the ability of the provincial government and other levels of government to maintain quality of life and provide the requisite level of public services.

Municipal role: Alberta's municipalities should continue to be responsible for fostering development of local economies and should be given the tools to accomplish this effectively.

Education and training: The provincial government plays a pivotal role in funding education and training, but must strengthen its role in facilitating collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders.

Coordinating economic development: A body such as a Minister's Advisory Council on Economic Development should be created to oversee the implementation of recommendations derived from the Toward 2000 Together project.

Alberta Vocational Centre (Calgary) Faculty Association

Our world is characterized by rapid technological innovation and a competitive and integrated global economy. Future conditions that will need to be addressed include:

- increasing pluralization and polarization of social, cultural, political and economic life that demand understanding and that requires innovative approaches to leadership, policy making, resource distributions and conflict resolution; and
- worldwide economic competition and interdependence which create ever increasing requirements for job-related performance and a need to transcend language, cultural, national and racial differences. (Spady and Marshall, October 1991)

We need to identify what students need to know to succeed in our increasingly complex society. The focus of a new, enhanced curriculum should be the development of higher order competencies and process skills. Rather than dealing with a subject area in isolation, students must be taught to use specific skills as

tools to be processed and adapted for transfer to a wider spectrum of knowledge.

It is important that we see success in education not as an end in itself but as a means to successful living.

Alberta Vocational College (Edmonton) — Toward 2000 Together Workshop

Following are excerpts from a summary of views expressed by 23 members of the Alberta Vocational College, Edmonton who attended a Stakeholder Group Workshop to discuss Toward 2000 Together.

In education, the quality that Alberta should aim at is not the current standard but a much higher standard to compete globally, e.g. lower drop-out rates, more workers upgraded and/or retrained, education made more efficient, and more recognition given to skills and not just to academics.

Adult education and training: There should be more cooperation among government, educators, industry and unions in the field of adult education and skills development. There should be no financial disincentive to prevent adults from attending school. Industry must encourage basic skills upgrading and lifelong learning for workers and increase the number of training hours per worker. (Average time in Canada spent training employees is 6.7 hours per year per person. Japan spends 200 hours per year per person.)

The funding bases should be broadened to include corporate funding for adult education and training. We should regard the multicultural nature of our population as a strength in terms of foreign expertise, initiative and thought processes. Employers could be given some type of tax incentive if they offer systematic worker improvement. Industry that shows a social conscience should be rewarded.

Alberta Women in Support of Agriculture

We have for many years, advocated diversification as a means to maintain a healthy economy in the province. This does not necessarily mean pouring money into projects, assistance in the form of marketing advice, tax incentives and interest shielding could be utilized. When projects are directly funded by government monies, there seems to be a tendency to keep injecting money when the business is obviously a lost cause.

Entrepreneurship will be greatly advanced with the involvement of employees in decision-making and profit sharing. Many labour-management disputes could be eliminated if there were understanding of both sides of a business.

Environmental considerations are an overriding concern with any development. Sustainable agriculture is a goal to strive for, and any commercial development must be subject to stringent rules that protect our environment for future generations.

Alberta Women's Institutes

Government, business, labour and educators are not working effectively together to achieve economic objectives. Each segment looks only to its own short-term betterment, and not at the overall long-term goal. Because of this, Albertans have adopted a negative attitude that can only be reversed if these segments of society look inward and make a sincere effort to work for the common good.

Industries such as tourism, advanced technologies, information-based services, and research must receive support to build a stronger Alberta economy.

Altacan Telecom Inc.

Albertans and their government must recognize the primary importance of a healthy private sector as the fundamental generator which enables society's other needs to be fulfilled. The extent to which Albertans' needs can be met will always depend on the success and health of the private sector.

Government's tasks in order of importance should be:

- to foster a healthy private sector through ensuring an internationally competitive business environment (i.e. attractive personal and corporate tax rates, minimal "red tape," etc.); and
- to provide public services only to the extent that they can be afforded, so that the cash requirement for these services does not impinge on the health of the private sector or the attractiveness of Alberta to new businesses.

Specifically, government should stick to infrastructure and business environment aspects of economic development; it should not be involved directly in the economy either through ownership or through direct financial aid to specific businesses, except in highly exceptional circumstances of provincial importance.

Anielski, M.

All employers (government and private sector) should be encouraged to support training and skill development, viewing such investments as beneficial to the government/firm with the payoff being high productivity and motivated employees.

Any future economic development in Alberta should only proceed with the full awareness of the opportunity costs or potential negative impact on the environment. A good investment in Alberta should be viewed on the basis of how "friendly" it is to the environment. Alberta may be judged by investors on its record of "clean" environment management while maintaining a high standard of living and healthy economic development climate.

I feel strongly that the Alberta government has a philosophical, ethical and policy role to play in economic development and diversification and a lesser role in direct (financial) assistance to achieve these goals. While governments can

attempt to establish a favourable investment climate, business must be left to make the investment decisions based on good market sense.

Association of Human Services in Alberta (AHSA)

The review you are undertaking is an important one. We would ask that your prime objective be the provision of meaningful work for all Albertans with an income sufficient to live in decency.

AHSA, an independent, provincial volunteer organization established in 1980 to enhance human services in Alberta, believes that social health and the quality of human relationships is strongly bound up with jobs, income and education.

Unemployment levels in Canada have been, more or less, continually rising since 1947, and economic policy seems to be ineffective in reversing this trend. Could federal funds for UIC and provincial dollars for social allowance be better channelled through local agencies that guide recipients to useful local service or employment or toward appropriate education? For a healthier society, please consider making full employment your prime target.

Athabasca University Development Institute, A. Bleiken, President

While global change has led to the creation of a number of important challenges, there are two issues, in particular, which are crucial for Alberta. First, there have been a significant decline in world demand and prices for natural resource commodities. Second, there is a massive economic transition underway from "national to global" competition. If Alberta is to continue as a prosperous society with its existing social amenities, it will have to make a number of major changes to respond to these critical issues.

The first change will be for all Albertans to understand and accept that the export of natural resource commodities will no longer sustain Alberta's present standard of living. The second change is in the urgent necessity for Alberta industry to understand and adopt globally competitive systems, concepts and practices. The third change is in the need to continue the restructuring of Alberta's economic infrastructure to achieve changes and improvement in education and training as well as government policies and programs. The fourth change is the need to accelerate economic diversification and value-added production. The fifth change is in the need to increase public awareness and understanding of these critical issues.

If we are to remain a prosperous society, a process must be established which can bring the divergent interests or needs of society into a common forum for discussion and resolution. This process must be broad enough in scope to be able to deal with cross functional issues involving business, government, labour and education.

Consideration should be given to the establishment of a Cross Functional Coordinating Council (CFCC) that would have the responsibility to review cross functional issues or concerns and to provide advice and direction on how to

implement required change within society. The composition of a CFCC should include senior representatives of business, government, labour and education.

The chief advantage of the CFCC is that Alberta would have an ongoing critical mass of expertise to deal with major issues or conflicts facing society. It would allow Alberta to address problems from differing perspectives within society. It would provide an opportunity to review the changing needs of business, government, labour and education with the objective of minimizing conflict within society. It would improve communications and understanding within the various sectors of society to achieve a better integration and coordination of cross functional services and programs.

Atlas Lumber Ltd., F. Fortin

At a Pincher Creek meeting October 3, 1991, the message from several business people to the government was: "leave us alone, please do not load us down with rules and regulations."

Automotive Industries Association of Canada

The federal public debt is at $430 billion and is rising out of control. We know that federal operating expenditures are less than revenues, which is a step in the right direction, but the federal government must reverse the overall debt situation. This must also be coordinated with the provinces. All governments need to buy into a common strategy to reduce debt and manage the economy better.

A high priority should be placed on creating a climate that encourages investment and creates jobs. We need to reverse the tide of jobs being lost to other countries.

Banister, H.

Rather than blame outside forces beyond our control, namely low prices for oil and natural gas, the government needs to focus on issues within its control, namely spending. Many conspicuous and unnecessary expenditures are taking place that we cannot afford from either an economic or political point of view. Government should adopt the alternative that "the primary economic role of the government should focus on providing a more competitive tax and business environment."

The Government of Alberta should focus on the essential roles of government, such as infrastructure, health, social services and education, and disengage itself from well-meaning but often imprudent participation in the economy.

Baugh, David J.

Diversification must continue, but the process can be improved. Failures are no reason to halt diversification, but Alberta must learn from the mistakes.

The Heritage Savings Trust Fund should be operated by a body free of political influence. The portion of the fund that is in cash or marketable securities should be allowed to grow. The province should consider the creation of several specialty funds, including a venture capital fund with investment from private citizens.

Beer, Ronald

I propose that one segment of our economic reforms be the adoption of free market zones in areas of chronic unemployment and in any other area which wants to improve its international competitiveness. As described in the book, Free Market Zones — Deregulating Canadian Enterprise, written by Dr. Herbert Grubel and published by the Fraser Institute in 1983, free market zones can be set aside for:

- free trade zones where firms can import, free of duty, goods for assembly, processing and distribution for export or for sale in Canada;
- free retail zones where foreign tourists can purchase goods free of customs and excise taxes;
- free gambling zones where all forms of gambling are permitted without restriction;
- free medical zones where doctors and drug companies can make available drugs, surgical procedures and therapies even if they have not been approved by government; and
- free enterprise zones where closed shops and other restrictive practices of unions are prohibited, contributions by employers and workers to the unemployment insurance and Canada Pension Plan programs are voluntary, minimum wage legislation is inapplicable, other regulations and controls are minimal, and there are no local taxes, with all services paid for by users.

Boone, Graham

In my opinion going into debt represents out and out theft. I urge you to do everything possible to avoid going into debt, and to reduce our debt to only that amount that can be properly serviced in terms of principal and interest.

I believe that the constitutional crisis and Quebec sovereignty have a big bearing on our future. Business depends on unity. If Canada is not unified, business will invest elsewhere.

Assuming the constitutional crisis is resolved, I believe we need to educate. We should demand two languages from our students before they graduate (English plus one of Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Spanish or French). We should teach

the advantages of international trade and emphasize investment for trade and new technologies. We should, of course, support research and development.

Canada Asia Accord Association

Top Canadian educators and government officials attending the Asia Pacific Foundation Round Table of Curriculum Discussions in Vancouver in early 1989 unanimously identified "increasing awareness of Asia and the Pacific" as a national priority. But have our governments and educational institutions made any progress, or taken any action, toward these goals so far?

Globalization is a reality. Our technological civilization has produced a global community in the environmental, economic, political and ethical dimensions. The things that we do in our own communities have effects in other parts of the world. Unfortunately, our social studies don't match up.

Our proposals are:

- Alberta should develop an Asia Studies curriculum as soon as possible and implement it in our school system from elementary school to high school.
- Take the Hon. Joe Clark's words, "We need more programs to help Canadians learn about Asia," to develop more programs to serve society at large. The target groups should include professionals, business people, government officials, and educators.

Canadian Association for Co-operative Education, Alberta Committee

At present in Alberta, there is a proven vehicle that meets two of the objectives of Toward 2000 Together: promotion of a highly skilled, innovative and adaptable workforce; and creation of stronger partnerships among employers, educators, government, unions and individuals. The vehicle is co-operative education, where students alternate periods of academic study with periods of paid, career-related work experience as part of their educational requirements.

Co-operative education is a partnership where employers become participants in the educational process along with the student and the educational institution. All share in the development of a student's skill, and the educational institution's awareness of the requirements of the workplace is expanded. The alternating of work and academic semesters fosters adaptability and flexibility in students and serves as an early model for life-long learning.

Because not all educational institutions have co-op education programs, not all Albertans have access to them. While programs are available in eight post-secondary institutions and are growing at the secondary level, much still needs to be done to raise awareness of this proven partnership. The Alberta government could provide help in developing an awareness program directed at the business community, students, and the general public.

Canadian Energy Services Ltd.

Prosperity for Alberta is directly linked to a plan of continued diversification. The Alberta government has an important role to play in the following areas:

- providing a competitive tax and investment climate to maintain current industries and also to encourage new industries; and
- being a leader in taking a supportive position for new projects and industrial expansions.

It is important to define the ground rules at an early stage with regard to environmental requirements so industry can design plants and make investment decisions accordingly.

Canadian Information Processing Society

The broad-reaching impact on the Alberta economy of recent downturns in the energy sector and the increasing globalization of business emphasize the need for Alberta to have a diversified economy and for Canada as a whole to have an internationally competitive economy. Achieving the vision of Alberta as a diversified, internationally competitive economy by the year 2000 will require a substantial effort on the part of the Alberta government, industry and Albertans.

Role of the Alberta government: It is clear the provincial government should play a key role in establishing an extensive education, health care, transportation, communications and municipal services infrastructure. The government should also play a key role in labour and environmental protection. The government's role in sponsoring research and business development is far less certain as there are a variety of approaches with varying degrees of risk, cost and benefit.

Information technology: The importance of information technology to the success of Alberta industry and the Alberta government in the year 2000 cannot be overstated. It enables organizations to become substantially more efficient and effective by re-engineering and automating their business processes.

Research and development: Technology research and development must be encouraged. However, it must be funded without increasing the financial burden on taxpayers. The Alberta government must provide the leadership required to ensure government's investments are focused on developing technologies that support our existing industries or knowledge-based industries.

Canadian Meat Council (CMC)

The Alberta members of the CMC are on record as advocating no government ownership of the industry and reduced government incentives to the industry.

In the food production industry, most of the costs and/or incentives must be compared with the lower manufacturing costs and better research and new equipment tax write-offs enjoyed by United States competitors.

Capnerhurst, T.

Alberta has been built on a resource (oil and gas) that will soon be exhausted. Alberta has always been known as a leader in world energy. If we are to continue to be leaders after our resource runs out, we must invest now in renewable energy research and technology.

Alberta agriculture is already on the decline. Soil mismanagement has created conditions similar to the "Dust Bowl" of the 1930s. To survive the next century, farmers must be encouraged to phase into the practice of organic, sustainable agriculture. Alberta could lead the nation in the production of organic food and corner the world market, which is growing in its demand for chemical-free food. Similarly, Alberta could become a world leader in recycled paper if existing lumber, paper and pulp processing plants were, in whole or part, converted to recycling paper.

Centre for Frontier Engineering Research, Touraj Nasseri, President

Science and technology are clearly the principal factors of wealth production in a thriving modern economy. They are also essential means of properly managing the critically sensitive relationship between the biosphere and the technosphere. They should therefore command a pre-eminent position in deliberations on economic policy.

We should spend more on R&D but the increased allocation of public funds to R&D must be linked to the development of criteria for measuring the effective use of the funds and to a more rigorous measurement of the performers. R&D expenditures by government should not be considered, or confused with, social programs.

The sound economics of R&D dictates that we must allocate our acutely scarce resources to carefully selected programs (targeting). In so doing we must build on our strength and be guided by a sense of realism as we inevitably and plausibly take risk with our resources. We must also define our strategic needs and the areas in which we can realistically be a major global player. It is not only the size of the market for a technology that should guide us, but also the share of the market which we are likely to win.

On securing capital, we must develop a technology profile that is attractive to the international investors and venture capitalists. There is a growing interest in global tracking of technologies for investors who are looking for promising technologies. Government should concentrate its resources on making the technology profile attractive to the private sector investors.

Christie, R.N.

Albertans need to look carefully at niche markets where we can move quickly to develop true leadership. These areas must be selected to minimize the adverse features of our region (lack of tidewater and sparse population resulting in high transportation costs) while maximizing the advantages we possess (good infra-

structure, free enterprise mindset, low crime rates, low poliution, good education system, etc.).

The megaproject mindset is not the only way to be successful. Many of the management gurus predict that the successful company of the 21st century will be small and structured to form and participate in strategic alliances to respond to emerging needs and opportunities.

Small companies often lack the management and marketing expertise to exploit their skill or technology. Government can, and should, work to evolve structures that will facilitate such companies being able to access needed management and marketing advice and expertise.

City of Fort McMurray

A greater emphasis through this decade will have to be placed on partnerships in economic development. The team approach will yield the greatest potential for success due to the pooling of expertise, budget considerations and efficiency of our human and financial resources.

Foreign competition is forcing Canadian companies to become involved in catch-up training. Industry cannot afford to have any percentage of its workforce unable to perform at the basic levels necessary to do the job. Education and training is not simply workforce readiness, but the building of skills that will be needed on and off the job.

Transportation, which includes roads, rail and air, is essential to effective economic development and sustainable growth. There needs to be greater flexibility in allocating provincial and federal funds for roads through Canada's resource areas.

City of Red Deer, Mayor R.J. McGhee

We believe that strategies should be put in place that are aimed at encouraging programs and processes that encourage the wealth that is created here to stay here and work for Albertans. We are not advocating protectionist measures, rather strategies that encourage growth from within as well as those that are aimed at bringing in new capital.

There is a need to respond to the skill development needs of older people, new immigrants and those who have not traditionally had a significant role in the economy.

In charting our economic course for the future, it will be important to look at opportunities for "synergy" — working with other groups that will move us further ahead than we will get by working individually. Traditional boundaries, such as national, provincial, county, departmental, public/private sector, and others need to be challenged in order to find more efficient and effective ways to accomplish things.

We see the primary role for the government to be the provision of a positive, attractive environment in which communities such as ours can utilize our com-

munity assets, such as quality of life, to attract the kinds of businesses we want to have located in our community. Therefore we need to have a competitive tax regime in place along with a minimum of business regulations. In addition, sound labour legislation and regulations need to be in place in order to maintain positive labour-management relations.

Government should primarily be a facilitator in economic development and, where incentives are necessary to attract investment in our province, they should be in the form of tax credits, not grants.

Clancy, Dorothy

Canada is seriously over-governed compared to other industrial countries. A half a million civil servants work for the federal government alone, and, in this age of easy communications, probably a quarter of this number would suffice.

A neglected money-making business in Canada is tourism. We have great tourism potential, especially in Alberta with its varied history and countryside, but we don't follow up on its potential.

Clearwater Economic Development Board

The answer to Canada's and Alberta's economic dilemma will begin with small business revival, since it is small business which has generated 80% of Canada's new jobs in the past decade.

The provincial government, through its Toward 2000 Together process, should consider developing an infrastructure in which rural Albertans in concert with their urban neighbours can establish, manage and finance business development initiatives at the local or regional level.

Whether the choice is a regional community bond program or business equity corporations, there must be provision for unqualified guarantees or some form of incentive (a tax benefit) in order to attract investors.

Coal Association of Canada

Alberta's coal industry will, in the short-term, face competition from natural gas for power generation. (Over 90% of the provincial electric power is currently coal fired.)

The price of natural gas is projected to substantially increase as demand exceeds supply on export sales toward the year 2000, whereas low sulphur Alberta thermal coal will remain a low-cost and viable source of local energy well beyond the next century. Unlike coal, natural gas is easily transported and most effectively used in residential and commercial heating. However, using natural gas for power generation will put upward pressure on the price of natural gas, thereby potentially hurting other sectors of Alberta's economy.

Coal-fired generation plants involve high capital costs and require long lead times for planning and construction. Therefore, it is imperative that regulatory agencies take a long-term view.

Economic diversification: The Alberta coal industry believes we must focus on our existing assets in both the renewable and non-renewable sectors as the basis for diversification in the province. The strength of the coal industry can provide a secure base from which diversification can occur. We must not turn our backs on those things at which we excel and in which we have a competitive advantage on a world scale.

Sustainable development: Most interest groups and government agencies have chosen to ignore the balance between economics and environment. The current approval process extends beyond three years in some cases for existing operations. The prospect for simplification and reduction in delays is remote as agencies and governments vie for control in the name of environmental protection. It is imperative that accommodation is quickly addressed to allow for the "sustainable development" of the coal industry.

Confederation of Regions (C.O.R.) Western Party

Albertans should accept the fact that this is primarily a raw material, resource-based province and that our resource producers are under-paid.

Theoretically, the Heritage fund is interest- and debt-free money and, as such, $2 billion of that money could be transferred, at no cost, to the Treasury Branches to become a pool or reservoir of special funds designated for use in augmenting the income of the raw material producer.

Cottonwood Consultants Ltd., C. Wallis

The underlying environmentalist agenda which many people, including some environmentalists, have either missed or will not discuss because they believe it impossible to change is the need to redefine economic growth. We need to put to rest this notion of old-style growth. It is no longer acceptable to think of an ever expanding population and economic growth as we have seen it in the past few decades.

It is hard to understand why we still promote forms of economic growth which will diminish the things Albertans value most — abundant clean air, clean water and natural areas. Ultimately our very freedom is at stake — increasing pressures and crowding bring increasing government regulation, a necessary evil to keep competing interests in balance.

To encourage more efficiency, recycling and conservation, the pricing of both renewable and non-renewable resources must reflect the true environmental cost of their use. Poor environmental and economic decisions are being made because of government subsidies and ridiculously low prices for water, access to forest resources, and materials like coal which, through their use, may be contributing to the greenhouse effect.

County of Vulcan — Economic Development Committee

Community bonds: We urge the Government of Alberta to follow the example of the Government of Saskatchewan and develop a Community Bond Program. The pooling of local resources to run businesses would enhance the services in rural Alberta. Focus should be on more and smaller size development.

Studies: The Alberta government should do fewer studies. Conducting study after study tends to delay development and they are very costly. One good study should be all that is required.

Colleges: The colleges should offer support for rural needs and let communities access it as required. Colleges should not direct the rural needs or decide the direction of focus for rural Alberta.

Programs: The Management Assistance Program is excellent for the business community and has been successful in many regions throughout Alberta. Programs like this should not be so costly that they are beyond the reach of rural business.

County of Warner No. 5

The County believes that in the objective related to fostering an entrepreneurial business culture in Alberta, the important words are "in all regions of the province."

The community development bond identified in the Local Development Initiative (LDI) would definitely be a vehicle for communities to move their own economic future forward. There should also be some type of direct government support for small communities that are forward-thinking in their initiatives for economic diversity.

Dabisza, Stan

The time has come for Albertans to stop complaining about the demise of the oil industry and look upon other positive solutions to our future prosperity.

The Alberta government must take a pro-active role in developing the tourism potential of the Canmore Corridor and other areas west of Calgary. Government must set the rules so that developments can proceed while protecting as much of our natural heritage as possible.

We can offer a very attractive tourist destination to the Japanese through astute development of golf courses, resorts, ski areas, restaurants and support services. To enhance the Japanese tourist opportunity, the Alberta government should work with the Government of British Columbia to develop a twice daily passenger train service between Calgary and Vancouver.

Deyell, Gerald M.

Governments must concentrate on:

- establishing stable and responsible fiscal regimes within which the private sector may function;
- providing the basic public sector infrastructure, including education, health and public security, within which we all live and within which the private sector can more effectively carry out its role; and
- providing an informed and well educated population that will be better equipped to meet the challenges of the year 2000 and beyond.

Governments must refrain from becoming "risk takers" in the economy. This applies particularly to direct investment (through either debt or equity) in economic initiatives or in public ownership and management of such initiatives. If an initiative does not have sufficiently attractive economics to warrant and justify private sector funding, it should not be undertaken with public funds.

Drumheller Regional Economic Development Authority

A new economic development strategy for Alberta must include a commitment to sustain the growth and prosperity of rural communities. Providing various incentives to industry (such as subsidized interest rates and investment tax credits) to locate outside the major urban centres would result in a more cost-effective use of the investment in infrastructure costs.

The present per-capita funding formulas used for many provincial programs such as those for Recreation/Parks/Tourism, do not provide sufficient funding for smaller/rural communities to keep pace with larger/urban centres.

Smaller communities must be given the opportunity and tools to plan their own destinies by:

- allowing communities to decide how their share of provincial tax dollars can most effectively be allocated;
- lessening bureaucratic interference from Edmonton;
- providing better access to capital from chartered banks and provincially funded programs;
- encouraging regional cooperation (within natural trading areas) in the development and implementation of community economic development programs.

Also advocated are:

- more colleges in smaller centres throughout Alberta as opposed to continual expansion of the universities of Alberta/Calgary;
- more opportunities for on-the-job training; and
- improved cooperation between federal and provincial programs in areas of economic development and job training.

Dougall, R.H.

Education: There is no point in spending large amounts of money on the diversification of our economy and creating new jobs if we do not have the people to properly do these jobs. Our education system is third rate behind Asia, Europe and the U.S.A. We have an unacceptable drop-out rate as well as many graduates who continue to be functionally illiterate. We should consider using our schools on a year-round basis as is done in some places in the U.S.A. An increase, not a decrease, in technical schools is necessary, as these people are the workforce of the future.

Research and development: We must increase the amount of money spent on R&D to become competitive with Asia, Europe and the U.S.A. Without these funds we are losing some of our best minds to other countries where research opportunities are available.

Environment: We must protect our environment and make those responsible for environmental damage correct it and pay for it, as well as levying large enough fines to deter them from repeating the offence. We should be aware of the fact that the native population lived in Canada for thousands of years and did no harm to the environment, while the so called "white civilized" people have been here only a few years and have caused enormous environmental damage in the name of progress and large industry.

Duguid, Alan T.

The basis of the Alberta economy for the next 25 years will be agriculture and hydrocarbon extraction, and to suggest otherwise is to deny reality. If diversification is to build on and branch out from the strengths of established Alberta industry and resources, then the goal is attainable. If it is to attract willy-nilly out-of-province industries which have no roots or history in the province, then we will surely be disappointed.

The most important element of any future economic strategy is the creation of the proper investment climate in Alberta. It is the responsibility of the government to supply the appropriate infrastructure and tax framework to allow industry to choose Alberta as a place to do business. Complementing this is the necessity for an education system which supplies the skills required by future employers. It is not for the provincial (or indeed any) government to either choose industries or business forms (i.e. small or large) which it thinks will prosper. This climate inherently includes a clear set of environmental standards, concisely defined and consistently regulated.

E. A. Clarke Management and Investments Inc.

In the decade ahead, the gross revenues of the Government of Alberta will likely decline significantly as our raw hydrocarbon resources are used up. Unless action is taken now to down-size personnel and programs, future Alberta tax-

payers will have to support a much higher tax regime than their competitors in other parts of North America.

Capital markets: "Scandals" such as the Principal Group have lead news media and the public to demand the tightening up of securities legislation and other controls. The unfortunate consequence of this is that it is now virtually impossible for new small businesses to raise risk capital from the public. How can we channel more risk capital into business development?

Some specific recommendations include:

- Increase the maximum number of shareholders allowed to private companies and private placements from 50 to 250 (or more).
- Amend legislation to enable shareholders of private companies to establish an "internal market" for their shares.
- Strengthen and improve disclosure requirements, strengthen criminal and other penalties for misrepresentation, and then allow companies to advertise share offerings under a controlled advertisement format.

Financial incentives to technical and corporate development: There is a potential for major gain in strengthening the interaction between our universities and our businesses. As fiscal constraints inevitably reduce the amount of government funding to universities, they will, of necessity, become more receptive to contract employment by businesses, and business readiness to do so could be enhanced and leveraged by financial incentives.

Edmonton Council for Advanced Technology

There is real substance to the assertion that we are moving into an Information Age or a Knowledge Era in which wealth is based on knowledge or information, as well as on manufactured products and natural resources.

Government should not play favourites nor try to make predictions on particular segments of the economy, which it is not well placed to make. The appropriate role for government is to act as an early consumer of advanced technology products and services.

Another facet of government policy should be the recognition of long-term investment. Government must not only recognize the need for long-term views in its own spending, but it also needs to encourage the adoption of similar views within industry to counter the fluidity of investment flow which focuses on quarterly reports.

Research and development is already recognized as being one of the keys to future business capability. As one of the main creators of knowledge and information, it will play an even more fundamental role in the future economy than it does now. The provision of provincial research facilities provides a pool of knowledge that businesses can turn to and that can address some of their needs.

Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission

Our views with respect to Alberta's future economic options and choices:

- We consider the funds spent on economic diversification initiatives an important long-term investment, which is necessary in order to improve our competitiveness in increasingly global markets.
- We would expect the government's role to shift away from short-term programs aimed at a minimizing impending losses (of employment, income, megaproject investment) to long-term, farsighted initiatives aimed at accelerating and guiding the restructuring of the provincial economy.
- New ways will have to be devised by the government for helping small communities and rural areas mobilize their resources and help themselves. These, among others, will likely include better access to all kinds of information, e.g. small business financing and management, emerging trade opportunities, etc. It will also likely involve assistance with new product development, local business training and the development of local financing tools which would allow local funds to be used for local initiatives.
- The Commission recommends that inter-governmental consultation and good land- use planning for metropolitan development be considered an integral part of the province's economic strategy.

Expeditors International Forwarding Ltd., R. Marr

As an entrepreneur and president of an Alberta-owned and operated company, I feel very strongly that government should not be involved in business. Government should provide a strong economy through reasonable taxes, create a good environment and spend our tax dollars wisely.

Fairview College Board of Governors

Education and training have a direct link to Alberta's economic wellbeing in future years. Education must be part of the solution to our economic and diversification challenges.

The crisis in agriculture and its effect on rural communities must be addressed. Alberta economic development must extend beyond Calgary and Edmonton. An economic atmosphere allowing present communities, businesses and farms to prosper is as important as, if not more important than, creating new jobs through diversification.

Faulder, George

Geographic diversification or promoting smaller community development is not prudent. Technological industries require a technology-based infrastructure. Smaller (and even some larger) centres are grossly lacking in such support.

Governmental assistance of various types should be made available to small and medium size businesses and these companies should have an appropriate stake in outcome.

Ferris, J. R.

If we are ever to take our place in competing in the world marketplace, we have to end the era of "Strikes and Confrontation." One suggestion would be to introduce a Labour/Management Court philosophy into production and the workforce. This sort of court could handle everything pertaining to any labour problem.

Forest Industry Suppliers Association of Alberta (FISAA)

In order to maintain Alberta's renewable forest resource for future generations, annual financial support will be needed from the Alberta government to plan and manage silviculture programs. Industry may only be able to absorb a portion of these costs to remain competitive against other regions outside Alberta.

Older mills in other areas of North America require new environmental protection equipment, controls, and instrumentation systems. Opportunities need to be identified for utilizing Alberta technology for the supply of goods and services for environmental protection services.

Private industry needs to do more in supporting employment-related education, skills upgrading, and on-the-job training in order to be competitive in the future. Employees will need to share in the cost of employment-related education as they are more mobile today and no longer look to spend their full career with one employer.

The Government of Alberta needs to continue providing leadership in striking the proper balance among job creation, economic development, and protection of the environment. Having environmental protection guidelines and policy clearly defined before projects are brought forward for approval creates more stability for investors and reduces public criticism.

FISAA believes that investment in high technology manufacturing and service industries needs to be market-driven and should be undertaken by the private sector, not government. The government's role should be to give loan backing when the need merits it and where the business plan and market plan are sound.

Fort Assiniboine District Environmental Action Association

The setting of economic goals must take into consideration many other factors, such as the quality of life we wish to enjoy as Albertans, the kind of environment we want to encourage, etc.

The use of financial incentives and subsidies to encourage the production of commodities that are in a glut condition on world markets seems unwise and

counter-productive (i.e. grain, pulp, oil). Looking at products that Alberta imports might suggest areas where diversification could be encouraged.

The focus of education could be away from the accumulation of knowledge and toward an emphasis on problem solving skills, how to do research, and where to go for information and answers. The distraction of employment could be discouraged by raising the minimum age for employment. Employer requirements of definite achievements in either academic or trade related training would help young people set goals in these areas. Employers could also offer more apprenticeship type programs, encouraging continued upgrading of skills and abilities.

Frey, John

Economic development: I honestly do not believe that a provincial government has the clout to affect major business decisions apart from the legislative arena. If our resources and market justify investment and development, business will become interested. (Government subsidies, grants, loans, and loan guarantees often assume ludicrous proportions. When total incentives reach $500,000 per job created, don't you think the lucky workers would be happy to take half the cash and stay home?)

Education: Perhaps business had better define and create the kinds of advanced education it requires. Public education does an excellent job of teaching basic skills. Business and industry would admit that if they hired the well educated graduates and trained them on the job. We need to take the mystique away from the universities. Let career and professional training occur where the jobs are. Let them do applied research in those situations. Universities are great places for pure research.

Gasketmaster, Inc., F.L. Murdock

We must diversify and service more markets outside of Alberta by overcoming higher transportation costs but, more importantly, by being price competitive with reliable after sale service and high quality control.

It is a must that we implement hi-tech systems and robotics at all levels of the manufacturing sector with particular emphasis towards the small manufacturer by way of equity investment. Loans and loan guarantees are not the answer in the long term. We must become more productive in output per hour by producing more with less hands-on labour.

Glaxo Canada Inc.

Economic success will accrue to those who have the skills and the technological capability to adapt to rapidly changing conditions and carve out niche markets with innovative products and processes. A highly skilled workforce, a commitment to research, design, development and manufacturing, together with a determination to improve productivity are prerequisites.

It is clear that those nations which have been able to forge an agreement on goals and strategies for industrial development have experienced the greatest international success and have been able to lay the groundwork for future growth. While the strong forces of societal cohesion and consensus that generally apply in those nations do not pertain to Canada, on-going consultation, cooperation and collaboration among the key participants in the economy should become an integral part of economic and industrial policy decision-making throughout Canada, rather than an extraordinary and isolated exercise.

The primary role of government in industrial policy making is to provide a stable environment conducive to broad economic development and consistent with environmental and social obligations. It should focus its attention on policies which provide incentives, reduce impediments and facilitate adjustments to growth and to competitive forces, leaving specific resource allocation decisions to the marketplace. The government will have to ensure that the business climate in Alberta remains compatible with industry's goals.

Industry's primary role in industrial policy making is to make the strategic choices: to decide which niches have the potential to provide a competitive advantage in domestic and international markets; to make the appropriate investment decisions; and to develop a workforce that is skilled and reskilled to meet current and future needs.

Harvie, J. A.

Education and research are very important. If we end up exporting expertise, it is not money well spent. While incentives are required to attract industries, it is preferable to have the government use tax considerations rather than grants.

Hattersley, Martin J.

Many of the problems of providing capital for business and economic development can be solved with a right approach to our Heritage Fund — which, up to now, has been invested by government with very little input from the people for whom it is supposed to be held "in trust." Might I suggest reorganization of the Heritage Fund into a number of mutual funds, in which all long-term Alberta residents have a share.

In a world of rapidly changing knowledge and skills, I believe that the time has come for a complete rethinking of our approach to education:

- Education should be life-long. Even a university degree becomes obsolete in time. There is a real need for continuous upgrading by people who are still participating in the working world.
- There needs to be more of a "level playing field" between private and public education. Education does not have to be provided by the state, and innovation is more likely to come from private institutions competing with the public system. Such private schools should not be discriminated against in funding by the government, but the government should provide inspection and testing to ensure reasonable standards are met.

Hemisphere Engineering Inc.

It is best to leave most businesses to stand on their own. Public intervention runs the risk of overcrowding the market and lowering the rate of profit, the exact opposite of what we are trying to do.

Hollingshead, A.

There are currently 83 programs and services offered by the Alberta government to help Alberta businesses help themselves. Business people chose to go into business. It is time to let them take the financial risks for their dreams, and let the marketplace look after itself.

Imperial Oil Limited

Government's contribution to efficient market operation: Imperial Oil has consistently emphasized the need for policies on energy and economic development to be based, as much as possible, on the operation of market forces to promote overall efficiency, to allocate resources more effectively and to stimulate new technology and innovation. A vital role for government is to help reduce or eliminate regulatory, institutional or informational barriers to the efficient functioning of markets. A few key principles should be considered and endorsed by both industry and government:

- revenue sharing regimes must embrace realistic expectations of the available economic rent;
- the entire fiscal system must be internationally competitive; and
- the fiscal system must be neutral across all sectors of the economy.

Strategies for the petroleum industry upstream include:

- an appropriate royalty structure in the conventional oil and oil sands areas;
- optimum utilization of the existing infrastructure for the oil sands and gas business;
- increased collaboration between industry participants and the public sector in conventional oil and oil sands research and technology development;
- a reduction in supply costs for both the gas and oil sands sectors;
- natural gas profitability enhancement through supply/demand balance and improved access to additional markets.

Independent Sawmillers of Alberta

In 1987, the Government of Alberta initiated an economic diversification program with emphasis on the expansion of the provincial forest industry. Now is the time for government to carefully review the status of the provincial forest

resource and the status of timber allocations and timber uses by the manufacturers. It is a time to critically assess the resource in relation to the products manufactured and the wastewoods being created.

Alberta needs to institute a rationalization program to determine the best uses of its forest resources — timber, water, fisheries, wildlife, access development, recreation, etc. What products produce the highest profit coupled with the greatest total employment and with the best use of the resource? Alberta needs to review its forest tenure system and its forest management program. It needs to study the timber profiles occurrence for its eight provincial forests — to start improvement of opportunities for the total forest industry.

Alberta has a significant forest area in the White Zone of the province. Some of this zone has been cleared for agriculture and then been abandoned. It has the potential to contribute timber volumes for product manufacture on a perpetual basis. It should be looked upon by government as an opportunity into 2000 A.D. for economic support and gain. No productive land should be allowed to remain fallow. This zone should be viewed as an opportunity for government and/or industry or municipalities to practice an Extension Forestry Program.

Intergraph Canada Ltd.

No one can accurately predict which way technology and business will evolve. Too often, governments assume they understand the direction of business evolution and target industry support based on their assumptions. This can lead to the support of overly-competitive and/or dying business sectors. One reason for this is the amount of time it takes governments to put programs in place. In today's world, the window of opportunity for technology is often very short.

The process of technologically advanced business cannot be driven; it can only be nurtured. When government supports an industry segment rather than nuture it, it greatly increases the risk that the business will be unsuccessful or the technology will be obsolete.

Support in the form of capital investment is not appropriate since over-capitalization causes a breakdown in small business management systems. With the support of government aid programs, many companies that were once viable and growing small enterprises have expanded beyond their markets and capability. What Alberta's technology companies need more than any other form of support is assistance marketing their products.

Jackson, B.

In the primary and secondary education systems there has to be consumer choice using a voucher system to develop competition as well as excellence. The current system teaches to the median of a declining system. There is not enough emphasis on excellence and striving for the best. As a result many young people are not challenged and often lose their motivation at the grade 1 or 2 level.

We should consider government policies that would put an export tax on raw materials. The more value-added, the less export tax. If they can afford to transport the raw materials somewhere else for processing, then we should hang onto the resources rather than ship them out to create jobs somewhere else.

The government should not invest in private or public companies unless the companies will allow public auditing of their records regarding financial statements and taxation accounts. If they want public money, they should show the public how they plan to manage it. If this policy was adopted, we would not have to worry about lending companies money, the companies would not want it.

Kain, Joan

Health care: Instead of using all lottery funds to assist in areas such as non-profit associations, sports, etc. (which I believe is great) could not 5% to 10% be allocated to health care, much as the Irish Sweepstakes supported hospitals in Ireland? Money could also be saved by having a better "check" of services provided so that funds are only provided for quality services.

Education: Providing their grades are high enough, Alberta students should be accepted into Alberta universities before allowing those from other provinces or other countries to register. Only after that should we accept students from the rest of Canada. Students from other countries could be accepted if spaces permit, but should be charged a higher fee than at present.

Economic development: I don't believe government should give grants for business, big or small, or for any other venture. Assistance should be in the form of a loan, perhaps without interest, that could be repaid as per the success of the venture or upon the sale of the business.

Kendall, J.

The improvement of our advanced technology industries affects our traditional industries in both safety and efficiency. Our R&D must be increased in quantity and quality, and effective technology transfer must be pursued.

It does not seem to be effective to put money into start-up companies. Tax incentives are better, ensuring a less risky approach for the government.

You cannot force people to live in rural areas. It does not make economic sense to provide an elaborate and expensive support structure when people are moving out of the rural areas.

Keyano College

Government must shift its policy away from wage subsidy programs toward provision of training opportunities. The public sector post-secondary institutions in this province have a long history of providing excellent educational services.

To assume that these public sector institutions should be overlooked and funds should be directed to private sector institutions or directly to private industry is a mistake.

Killam and District Business Development Association

What we need on the part of the provincial government is a commitment to action — and the will to put policies and resources in place for this to occur.

The government's role should be to:

- Encourage small to medium sized business development, rather than maintain the current government hangup with megaprojects.
- Especially encourage agri-processing to locate outside the central corridor, by use of subsidies, marketing assistance, etc. This allows farm produce to be value-added before leaving the rural area. Rural diversification is increasingly needed as the full impact of rural depopulation becomes apparent. Agri-processing has far more impact on rural communities than other industries.
- Take an immediate positive stand on ethanol development before Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Montana leave us far behind. An integrated ethanol plant involves a number of other industries such as feedlots, and attracts a myriad of downstream industries.
- Work hard to get the Crow rate payment given directly to the farmers The Association supports the Agricultural Diversification Alliance in their opposition to the Western Grain Transportation Act (Crow Benefit) payments going to the railways, instead of directly to producers.
- Cut the paperwork and bureaucracy in government programs.

Kostuch, Martha

Economy is the science of managing our resources. The economy includes more than those things that have a commercial value attached to them. The economy includes everything we place a value on.

Government, among other things, should:

- allow the Alberta Round Table on Environment and Economy to play the lead role in developing the economic plan for the future of Alberta;
- enact Freedom of Information Legislation (a healthy economy requires that Albertans be well informed);
- espouse the goal of full employment and encourage labour-intensive industries and businesses;
- discontinue support for megaprojects or non-renewable resource development, while encouraging ecotourism and supporting and encouraging energy conservation and development of renewable energy;
- stop subsidizing irrigation expansion which results in overproduction of certain crops and unfair competition with dryland farmers; and

- encourage every community in Alberta to develop a conservation strategy or an environmentally sustainable development strategy.

Kueber, Ken

Place a flat rate tax on income over $20,000 — and no tax on income below $20,000. Abolish income tax. Enforce G.S.T. on every product and every service, with nobody eligible to claim back on G.S.T.

Implementing a flat rate tax would put thousands of dollars in taxpayers pockets. How? We wouldn't waste our money on accountants. Thus enabling taxpayers to spend more to stimulate a weak economy.

Lakeside Farm Industries Ltd.

Many of the economic conditions we are subjected to are the result of economic cycles much stronger than government attempts to change the course of events.

Cost competitiveness is absolutely essential as business becomes more global. Cost management is one of the few areas we can directly control.

We cannot continue to live beyond our means in supplying education, health and social services. We need a measure of cost-effectiveness in these areas.

MacDonald, N.

The province has played too strong a financial role through the provision of loan guarantees and grants to large corporations and businesses. The major problem with the government providing financial incentives is that inefficiencies are introduced into the marketplace.

Industry may be attracted by the incentive, but the company remains only so long as the government-provided financial incentive is present. Once the incentive is discontinued, market forces re-assert themselves and the industry closes or seeks greener pastures, leaving local and regional markets worse off than before. Numerous examples in Alberta from previous years exist and, from news reports, several more may be expected.

The role for government is in the promotion of business opportunities nationally and internationally. Firms which become aware of opportunities in Alberta through promotional efforts, and subsequently choose to locate here, are more likely to be successful because they chose the location for sound economic reasons—they are not dependent upon subsidies for assistance.

If incentives must be paid to the private sector, the government would be better off focusing upon small and medium firms. These companies are more likely to hire and purchase locally and regionally. These are the businesses which pay taxes, unlike large corporations which rarely seem to contribute to the province through taxes.

The impact of small or medium firms is smaller. On one hand the positive impacts are reduced as compared to mega-projects, but so is the social disruption to local and regional social networks and economies. Should small firms fail, the negative impacts are more likely to be manageable as well. When mega-projects fail, entire communities are destroyed. With small firms in diverse industries, local economics are less susceptible to failure.

McCauley Community League

The McCauley Community League believes that a Community Economic Development Plan would best serve the community, allowing for community decision-making and control. This would make the best use of resources and give the most benefit to the community.

This form of economic development has proven effective in many cities across Canada. It has helped to revitalize older communities, it has helped to create jobs and economic opportunities for community residents, and it has served to provide a base for businesses to re-establish in areas which had previously been considered as having low business development potential.

We would urge that you support new and creative solutions which are community-based and supported. Please give special attention to those projects which ensure that jobs are created for local residents and which provide training and long-term job security. Please support projects which use the resources that exist in the community and which put resources back into the community in which they are located. It is only with this type of development that our communities will grow stronger economically. This economic strength will bring about a lessening of the social costs which accompany a poor economic base and will, in turn, make even more resources available to the community.

McGladdery, D.

We must learn to compete on quality, not on price. It's not diversification we need, but to concentrate our efforts on value-added industries and businesses where reliable quality performance can enhance our natural advantages.

Provincial spending must be brought into line with revenues. Alberta's lack of a provincial sales tax is a costly cultural anomaly which should be corrected. While a consumption tax could be instituted without making Alberta "worse" than other provinces, increases in income tax, for example, could not.

Mennonite Central Committee, David Hubert

In Canada in 1991, 1.5 million people, most of whom wanted to work, were paid $18 billion to do nothing, while large parts of Canada needs to be reforested, the environment needs to be cleaned up, the urban infrastructure needs to be restored, housing in every inner city in Canada needs renovation and

renewal, and human needs go unmet all over Canada. In Alberta, in 1991, approximately $1.8 billion was spent in this unproductive way.

As we move toward the year 2000, we must make better use of our human and economic resources. We cannot afford to go on in the present manner for it is too great a drain on our economy.

I believe unemployment insurance could be administered much more effectively at the provincial than at the national level. If this occurred, we could ensure that UI funds are used to increase the productivity of both our people and our province.

Mills, Matthew D.

Before the Alberta government undertakes any plan to develop and diversify the economy, it needs to come up with a foolproof process to aid it in choosing the direct beneficiaries of government loans, grants and other financial assistance.

The key ingredient to a prosperous Alberta is our students. The government must not lose sight of its commitment to education, both at the general level and the post-secondary level.

Murray, Richard G.

There is currently a move toward distributed work activities as evidenced by an increase in home-based businesses and companies willing to contract work out to small firms and individuals. This entire sphere of activity has enormous potential as an economic stimulus.

Distributed work environments also permit people to purchase houses which are not in major urban centres. This can create an economic revival in towns traditionally dependent upon agriculture as an economic base.

Nanton Economic Development Committee

Wherever possible, the government should reduce its direct financial involvement in business projects. Business proposals submitted for grants or financing should be strictly evaluated by an independent private sector consultant rather than by internal government committees. This practice would help ensure objective reporting and reduce politicians' involvement in business.

More rural diversification programs would allow a shift from our heavy reliance on an unstable agricultural economy to others which offer stability and increased opportunity for community members.

Norrie, D. H.

While the traditional resource, agriculture and tourism areas will continue to be important for Alberta, the real opportunity for a diversified expanding economy in this province lies in rapid development of high technology manufacturing and information technology areas through clear government strategy and associated policies. Government would have to:

- provide a competitive taxation and investment climate;
- develop education and training programs in these areas at all levels; and
- expand research and development activities in these specific areas.

Northern Telecom Canada Limited

There is less and less requirement for government to become involved in economic planning through such vehicles as loans, equity, grants and loan guarantees. If monies are not forthcoming from conventional sources, then the business proposal likely has little long-term merit and virtually no chance of providing a payback to government and its electorate.

Government also bears a responsibility to develop a financial climate that allows businesses — large and small — to compete without being hobbled by excessive taxation, bureaucracy or regulatory hurdles.

An education system that is focused on excellence and leadership is a key pillar in building economic success. Canada's education system presently lacks the national coordination and resources required to produce the kind of skilled graduates this country will need in the years ahead.

Government can no longer afford to artificially prop up communities or economic activities that are not based on a sound business footing or do not have a futures orientation. Smaller communities and rural Alberta will be faced with the challenges of responding to the realities of a global economy in the same manner as urban centres.

Government should be cautious in picking "winners and losers," but rather make the playing field as level as possible through cultivating an environment for business, then allowing business and market forces to unfold.

The Government of Alberta must recognize that the global economy of tomorrow will bear little resemblance to that of the past or even today. Change can no longer be considered change; it is now the norm.

Norwest Labs

Suggestions include: placing more emphasis on R&D; ensuring that all university-funded research has a technology transfer objective and an identified recipient or cooperator; and providing low interest, long-term loans for R&D purposes (2.5% to 5% interest).

Government should identify technology streams and market objectives and foster cooperation among all parties in research, financing and marketing.

Ostergaard, B.

As we move away from a commodity- or resource-based economy and as our price expectations fall due to global competition in commodities, we must all realize that our living standards will depend much more on wealth produced than wealth extracted. This may require extensive cut-backs in social programs.

I believe too many people look to government as the creator of wealth, and I see the government assuming this same attitude. There may be unpleasant social consequences if we allow this thinking to continue to the point where reconciliation is forced upon us. The privilege of social programs grows out of the wealth created by a healthy and profitable private sector.

Page, William J., Ogilvie and Company, Barristers and Solicitors

The oil and gas industry clearly generates economic strength, directly and through petrochemical and other related industries. Technology is its strength, both locally and as an export.

Rather than thinking of this as a mature industry that is in decline (which is how those in the industry seem to think the government thinks), we should be making it clear that we support priority technical developments in this sector. Technology will enhance our level of reserves, improve our finding and producing efficiencies, and enhance our ability to control environmental impacts. We are forgetting to give recognition and support to a basic, critical industry that can and should lead or advance the economic development of the province again.

Pason Well Services Ltd., Jim Hill

The key to a strong, diversified provincial economy is a balanced budget and a reduction of the provincial debt. Accomplishing those goals will spur on the economy to a far greater extent than a myriad of committees and programs. How can business leaders be expected to invest in education and plants within Alberta when the provincial budget is in ruins and getting worse?

My suggestions are very simple but effective:

- stop all government loans and guarantees to private industry;
- reduce the civil service by one third;
- institute a 5% sales tax;
- pass "balanced budget" legislation; and
- restrict technology investment to a 15% piggyback on the federal 35% R&D Investment Tax Credit refundable credit system.

Peace River Town Council

Our government and educational institutions must put in place an educational system which provides the basics in life skills for our youth, including skills in proper communication, problem-solving capabilities, basic science and mathematical concepts, and skills to deal with an increasingly complex society and the resulting anxieties and stress that our youth must cope with on a day-to-day basis. At the same time, the business community will have to adopt an attitude that their greatest asset is their employees.

In 1990, during the public process of the Local Development Initiative, the general public put forward to the council four main recurring themes:

1. Develop an INFORMATION NETWORK to assist local businesses and communities to make local decisions on new markets, technologies and opportunities.
2. Formulate an EDUCATION PROCESS to help train local decision makers to take advantage of the information network.
3. Put in place LOCAL FINANCE VEHICLES to provide local capital funds for innovative business ventures for projects unable to receive financing from traditional lenders.
4. Provide a COORDINATED GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY NEEDS to ensure local needs are met with minimal government red tape in the approval process.

With a coordinated effort to put in place the objectives of the Local Development Initiative and the continued decentralization policy of our provincial government, it is hoped the long-term economic viability of our rural communities will be assured.

Stabilizing the agriculture sector in the face of an unfair international agricultural marketplace must be a priority with our federal and provincial governments. A stabilization plan must be put in place immediately to ensure the long-term economic viability of our Canadian family farm system. The industry must have the opportunity to move toward value-added production with the direct payment of the Crow Benefit to the producer.

Project Management Institute, Northern Alberta Chapter

Alberta's industries and companies are presently competitive in North America but, with few exceptions, are not competitive overseas. The latter can be improved by increasing productivity, improving management and aggressive global marketing.

All government policies, overseas political change and global competition are important for Alberta's future. Constitutional changes are not.

Elements of an economic and diversification strategy:

- Courses in small business management should be initiated early in the public school system.

- Maintaining and enhancing the viability of rural communities is not important if primarily for nostalgic reasons.
- Providing an attractive investment climate is very important. Tax advantages can be used. However, the government should not be a shareholder.
- Small business start-ups should be encouraged as long as appropriate training and repayable low-interest loans are provided.

Prosolve Consulting Ltd., David W. Hall

There is a need for management skill in the manufacturing industries of Alberta. Our manufacturers are small, fragmented, poorly organized and unsophisticated relative to those elsewhere.

Keys to Alberta's manufacturing success will be:

- sound management of all functions (finance, marketing, production, research and development, design) based on the principles of quality;
- an understanding of technologies AND the management of those technologies; and
- the development of business strategies that recognize and understand future requirements.

This means that Alberta will need people who are educated and trained to apply technologies in business.

Putt, K. W., Member, University of Calgary Senate

It is important to lever Alberta research expenditures by improving connections between public and private research activities in the province through more joint industry/government-contracted research and technology development. This will help Alberta remain internationally competitive and create new export market demand for Alberta products and services.

The economic development leverage of having two world-class universities (the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary) should be stressed. Both internationally recognized, full-fledged research universities, they contribute to the economic wealth of Alberta, to the technological and human resource capabilities of the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, and beyond to the world.

Rangayyan, R. M., University of Calgary

Alberta needs to move toward an economy led by technology and knowledge. The lack of involvement in and support for fundamental research and unrestricted technological development at the grassroots level is a matter of concern.

In particular, there is a critical need for increased financial support for the universities, for the development of new programs in engineering and science, and

for supporting new research projects, graduate studies, and post-doctoral research fellows in science and technology.

Red Deer Toward 2000 Together Workshop

Representatives of the business community, local government, education and tourism attended a workshop to recommend strategies to achieve a strengthened Alberta economy. The following is a sampling of views expressed by the participants.

Government's role is to:

- promote an entrepreneurial culture which will result in strengthening the private sector and promote and support an entrepreneurial attitude and culture within the education systems;
- promote a learning culture which will influence attitudes and result in a greater degree of commitment from individuals;
- foster equality of opportunity in business;
- develop and disseminate information useful to the private sector in increasing its competitive abilities and opportunities;
- develop industry-related "centres of excellence";
- reduce the level of corporate taxation;
- use the annual interest on Heritage Trust Fund investments for operating expenses for the government;
- leave community development to the marketplace and provide tools to help communities undertake economic initiatives and to encourage the development of regional centres with the viable decentralization of government and education administration;
- provide a vision and clear direction in the area of tourism development (provincial strategy); eliminate subsidies for capital development which supports tourism (level playing field); and encourage the development of tourist facilities and programs which cater to our visitor profile and changing demographics.
- encourage "clustering" of businesses and industries for sound business/economic reasons versus political reasons;
- maximize the benefits from environmental industries such as recycling and waste management; and encourage the development of industries which are taking steps to minimize the impact upon the environment.

Reel, D.

The future of Alberta's economic welfare is dependent on a resource usually taken for granted: industrial (surface) minerals, sand and gravel. No longer can the resource that provides the foundation for our society and its industrial base be ignored.

I recommend that government recognize the significance of this resource to a healthy future by addressing it in your "new strategy" and that it relay this importance on to Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife to help the department reassess its priorities with regard to resource management of surface materials. Industry and all the stakeholders (Alberta Transportation and Utilities, counties, MDs, etc.) should be involved in the process to strengthen resource management.

Renaissance Energy Ltd.

The industry that funded the Heritage Fund and was the major net contributor to the prosperity of Alberta over the last three decades deserves more respect and consideration than is represented by the current (Toward 2000 Together) debate.

Instead of looking over the horizon for exotic new industries, help our fundamental existing industries — energy, agriculture and forestry. As long as these core industries are weak there is no support for new ventures. Our basic industries have natural advantages that deserve to be cultivated. Economic diversification at a time when energy, agriculture and forestry are reeling from a variety of negative factors is folly. Now is the time to build on our strengths and invest in the future to help these industries through the current downcycle.

Resource Information Systems, Peter Thompson

Mr. Thompson envisions a significant high technology industry for Alberta in the area of software support and maintenance of computer applications.

By outsourcing to private industry the support and maintenance of its computer applications, the Alberta government could secure numerous benefits for Alberta, including savings of an estimated $25 million per year (20% of current application software maintenance costs) while meeting privatization objectives and building an Alberta-based service industry whose objective is to maintain and support computer application software worldwide. This would put Alberta on the leading edge of technology in software maintenance tools and techniques.

Ritzer, E. G.

Only a decade ago, nations blessed with abundant natural resources could count on the export of those resources to support the highest quality of life in the world. This is no longer the case. Increasingly in the move to an information economy, it is the interplay of the "Knowledge Economy Triad" with its elements of computers, communications infrastructure and knowledge-human capital that will determine standards of living. Information and knowledge are replacing physical (labour and resources) and financial capital as the major competitive advantage in business.

Recommendations include:

Computers: Alberta should focus on adding value to computing through the intelligent application of knowledge through software development, not hardware. Hardware has in most cases become a commodity item with a low profit margin.

Communications infrastructure: We must ensure we provide the best communications infrastructure in the world to attract the world's best knowledge workers and corporations to locate in our province.

Knowledge-human capital: To equip our knowledge professionals with the practical knowledge of how to convert knowledge into an electronic format suitable for consumption in the Knowledge Economy and to encourage the development of business enterprises specifically designed to do this, I suggest a series of grants to Alberta's existing educational institutions and to the private sector. These would be designed to stimulate research in the Knowledge Economy and to fast track the development of knowledge economy entrepreneurs.

Rogers, R. B.

Government should promote and provide non-financial support to a free enterprise system in Alberta. There is no question that business equals jobs, which is the key ingredient and future for all Albertans.

No more taxes should be levied on the public and/or on business. The current taxing structure in this province is absurd and is more of a hindrance to business than a positive. As a suggestion, why not eliminate the entire provincial income tax structure and introduce a provincial sales tax that would offset this difference? This would be a fair and equitable system in that all people would pay according to their own needs and wants and would be taxed accordingly.

Rural & Improvement Districts Association of Alberta

Our government must be encouraged to become "leaner and meaner" to accomplish more with less funding.

We need a detailed accounting of the Heritage Trust Fund, culminating in the production of a public report.

Sabre Energy Ltd., R.J. Pirie, President

- Discontinue all loans, grants, subsidies, loan guarantees and other financial assistance to business except limited financial assistance for R&D and environmental improvements and subsidies to agriculture to compensate in part for foreign subsidies.
- Eliminate the corporate income tax.

- Encourage elimination of interprovincial trade barriers.
- Eliminate the Heritage Fund and use liquid assets of the fund to pay down provincial debt. (The Heritage Fund has always created resentment in other provinces. In view of the large provincial debt, it is now an embarrassment to most informed Albertans.)

Schiebein, R.

The major factors impacting diversification are: debt (federal, provincial, municipal, and individual/corporate), constitutional uncertainty and its problems/potentials, foreign investment/ownership and tax rates.

The accumulated debt is now so high that even formerly "sacred" programs are in peril due to the collective inability to pay. Unless this root problem is addressed, then most of the province's ability to deal with other issues will decline. A "holistic" approach to the welfare of the province must be undertaken and not just specific elements such as diversification.

Schmidt, R.K.

The role of the government should be to recognize the negative effects of the economy and provide checks and balances to eliminate, overcome, or minimize these negative effects. The focus of the economic strategy should be to provide a more satisfying lifestyle for Albertans.

The government should liquidate the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund and apply the capital to the deficit. The Trust Fund has not provided the positive benefits intended. The Trust Fund has instead become a focus of dissatisfaction and misunderstanding.

Support for business development should consist of providing information and infrastructure, while direct aid, especially financial, should be a last resort. Direct intervention by government should occur only in exceptional circumstances, under strict conditions and guidelines.

Score Resources Ltd.

We must strive toward promoting manufacturing and small businesses. Small cores will be more successful than any mega industry. We must put our faith and backing in this direction, not in mega- and multi-nationals that can afford to market ideas themselves.

Small business is finding it more and more difficult to secure financing for start-ups. Banks and other institutions are not willing to risk money in these ventures. If this trend continues, the will to go into business will disappear.

Seaborn, Clark, Seaborn Consultants Ltd.

Government taxation, the high cost of government services and high labour costs (which are heavily taxed by government) are directly responsible for making Alberta uncompetitive.

The market will target specific industries that have hopes of succeeding in Alberta — not some bureaucrat or politician who is less than objective and who wishes to put a megaproject in his constituency.

Smith, Carol

If we continue along the path decreed by current economic theory, mankind is condemned to a appalling end. We are already spectators to several major economic breakdowns. High unemployment, increasing numbers of bankruptcies, cuts to social programs, and more welfare recipients are examples of a system that is not working. It is time to realize that economic growth — at all costs — will not guarantee economic and social prosperity. Current economic theory is two centuries old, created at the start of the industrial revolution before the physical limitations to the earth's resources were comprehended.

Today, while we still have the opportunity to change, we must make the decision to pursue a sustained economy. By ensuring biodiversity, we have the ability to evaluate our progress toward sustained development.

Development is not, by definition, incompatible with environmental protection: indeed, sustainable development can be seen as an insurance policy, over the long-term, for the environment. Thus conservation and development are mutually reinforcing activities, not two opposing sides, and the focus of sustainable development is on planning to conserve for, rather than against, appropriate development.

Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Academic Faculty Association

We have to develop long-term strategies to address the needs of the provincial economy. One such strategy is to enhance and improve the quality of education, thereby confirming Alberta's bright future.

An infrastructure is in place in this province through the technical institutes, community colleges, and the universities. These institutions have the ability to address the knowledge base to seek out the opportunities. They also have the ability to provide the upgrading, retraining, and skill-specific training, given a very short lead time. That ability to respond quickly, however, is being eroded. The institutions could react very quickly to the needs of employers with the commitment of government.

The physical plants of the institutions and the ability to maintain the programs these institutions are charged with delivering are deteriorating because of declining funding from government. In a recent survey of Albertans, 93% of respondents believed that post-secondary education was good for the Alberta

economy rather than a burden on the economy, and almost three quarters would support an increase in taxes to secure better quality education in the province. Over half of those interviewed (55%) stated that the Alberta government does not spend enough money on post-secondary education to meet the needs of the province.

The government must accept the responsibility for social programs and accept the challenge of enhancing the tax base to provide those programs. They can do this through providing incentives to business through property and business tax relief or deferral, ensuring access to quality social services, and a commitment to maintain those social services. The government should not, however, interfere with the marketplace in terms of financing directly or indirectly through loans, loan guarantees or grants. The marketplace should decide if a project is viable, and the government should ensure that, if a project is viable, there is an environment in which it can flourish.

Spendlow, V. W.

We must support the free enterprise concept and get away from government ownership and direct control. Government should be an adviser to business people, but should not be a financial or a money lending house for some fly-by-nighter to take advantage of.

Stargate Consultants Limited, Thomas E. Clarke

Unless Canada increases its investment in the total infrastructure supporting the technological innovation and entrepreneurship process, we are destined to become a truly third world nation.

We under-invest in research and development, make little attempt to learn how to manage technological innovation or technical entrepreneurship, and don't hold scientists, engineers and technologists in high regard or recognize their contributions to Canadian society.

One issue stands above all others. Canadians do not believe that our ability to develop and utilize science and technology has any bearing on their pocketbooks. They are unaware that our competitors are not going to beat us with cheap labour, but with more effective use and application of science, engineering and technology.

Stelco Steel (Western Region), H.J. Lepp

To stabilize our industry and other manufacturing in general:

- a moratorium should be placed on major new initiatives in health, safety and environmental regulation;
- a moratorium should be placed on new taxes or levies on inputs to the manufacturing process, including land, capital, energy, wages and benefits;

- the Provincial Income Tax rebate to consumers of electricity purchased from privately owned utilities should be reinstated; and
- the EEMA shielding should be reinstated for major industries that must compete globally.

Stettler Economic Development Board

Balanced economic growth is vital to the survival of rural Alberta. Equal emphasis must be placed on rural and urban economic growth. Government policies and initiatives must reflect this philosophy.

The Alberta and Canadian governments must reduce taxes for industries to remain competitive. A number of relocations to the U.S. and a drop in tourism are due to visible and hidden taxes. Social programs, including new buildings and new hospitals (designed to ensure government re-election) are "out" in the 1990s.

Stoneman, D. G.

While economic diversification is an important objective for Albertans, proper emphasis must also be directed to ensuring that the base of our economy, the energy industry, rebounds and remains healthy. A healthy energy industry is essential to support diversification objectives. While the oil and gas industry today represents a lower percentage of Alberta's GDP than it did five years ago, it still is the largest source of direct revenue. With associated service sectors and suppliers, the oil and gas industry impacts on 70% of Alberta's economy.

A sales tax is a way to achieve a balanced budget. Albertans want a high and growing standard of living. We also have to pay for the services that go with our high standard of living. A sales tax at a level which leads to a balanced budget and does not put us at a competitive disadvantage with other jurisdictions should be saleable to Albertans.

Strathcona County — Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee

Diversification strategy: We believe that Alberta's economic future depends to a large degree on the success of implementing a strategy of diversification which is realistic, achievable and carefully thought out, involving Alberta's educators and the business community. Although recognizing the importance of high tech and R&D, the strategy must examine the diversity potential that exists within Alberta's base industries such as agriculture, forestry, oil, gas and petrochemicals.

Education: The success of an economic diversification program hinges on the availability of a strong and educated workforce. Can Alberta afford a continued brain drain to elsewhere or can it afford to cut back on education at a time when we are led to believe that in order to compete in a global market we

must review and improve educational and training programs? We think not. Education is the key to success.

Environment: Economic growth can no longer be encouraged at the expense of our environment. We must stand together and say enough is enough.

Use of Heritage Fund: The Fund should not be accessed to finance projects outside Alberta. If the province chooses to continue with funding programs, financial assistance should be provided to small fledgling businesses rather than a select handful of large conglomerates.

Business incubators: We believe it is high time we recognize and capitalize on home-based cottage industries, many of which need a helping hand to move from the nest to the outside business world. Municipalities, with financial and non-financial assistance from the province, should establish business incubators to help small home-operated businesses expand through use of shared facilities and services.

Syncrude Canada Ltd.

Resource industries are the cornerstone of the Alberta economy. The continuing development of our resource industries will ensure that Alberta and Canada have an economic base from which to expand. Support industries will follow and generate further economic expansion.

The rapidly declining reserves of conventional light and medium crude oil, however, require that a forward-looking energy strategy take advantage of the vast reserves of the Athabasca oil sands. Synthetic crude oil can play an important role in satisfying our energy requirements within Canada while generating economic benefits.

The oil sands industry is a young business and, as such, brings with it new ideas, as well as responding to the needs of society-at-large. The benefits of developing the oil sands would touch all segments of the Alberta economy, including:

- security of supply of oil products for Alberta and Canada and for export;
- continued generation of revenue for the Government of Alberta through taxes and royalties;
- cooperative research and development efforts that will benefit all industry;
- generation of employment opportunities, wealth and prosperity for Alberta;
- development of employment opportunities for native Canadians;
- leadership in loss management, helping industry acquire safer and healthier workplace attitudes and systems; and
- leadership in providing more flexible career paths, enhancing Alberta's overall competitive position.

Further development in the oil sands industry can lead to substantial benefits for Alberta and Canada for years to come. However, oil sands industry development requires large capital investment and long lead times before benefits begin. Government support does not need to be in the form of grants or "give-

aways" but should recognize that risk sharing can be in the forms of tax or royalty relief, investment tax credits, low interest loans, or other forms that favour generating additional revenue in the future and immediate social benefits such as job creation and community development.

Task International Consultants Association, Charles Pei

Poor investment decisions: The Alberta government has failed more than once in its major investment in the so-called high potential projects. Our industrial development must not be directed toward this kind of major project with a single product-line.

Abused method of economic analysis: What is the priority we place on environmental protection and economic growth? The groups who advocate environmental protection, as much as the industry that intends to develop a large project, must be clear in their views of the possible choices for overall economic growth and environmental quality for Alberta. In essence this province is our common property.

Lack of an integrated partnership in education: Why are there high school drop-outs? Why do we not have a ready-pool of manpower with the relevant special training? One of the reasons could be that we are too compartmental in our approach to this human resources development problem.

Telus Corporation

The development cycle to convert a research idea into a revenue generating product or service is a costly and risky undertaking. Currently, the Alberta government attempts to ameliorate these factors through direct funding, R&D infrastructure development, procurement practices, and consultative support activities. However, the Alberta government might make more effective use of these resources through a greater reliance on R&D consortia and joint partnership collaborations.

Business increasingly views the education and training of its workforce as a critical investment. Government can support business in the education and training field in a number of ways:

- Consideration should be given to diversifying apprenticeship programs into new areas and fields of interest. Technical training may also be provided through short-term certificate-like programs.
- Consideration should be given to the establishment of joint business/education partnerships at the post-secondary level. This activity would concentrate on developing core curricula and programs, with the establishment of specialized training centres based on business needs.

Terry Anne Developments Ltd.

Government should allow the financial institutions already established to be the sole financiers of new and existing businesses, and not provide "last ditch funding" to any business that can't make it in the competitive marketplace.

The environment must play an important role in the development of our future economic strategy. There are areas that can be looked at which would not only address the environmental concerns in our own province, but also provide for the sale of technological advancements throughout the world.

Tolsma, J.

If the government is so worried about education, why did it allow the University of Alberta to turn away 2,100 qualified students last year because of underfunding? If our monetary system was functioning properly, the government could make funding available interest free. It shows again our debt bondage system. The same applies to competitiveness and free trade. Because of our interest-bearing indebtedness, we cannot compete. Competitiveness and education are made symptoms to be blamed.

Money has to be injected into the production sector of our society. Call it a grant, subsidy or whatever. It does not matter as long as it comes into existence interest free. From there it will flow to the working population, who in turn will have it to spend, to consume our productivity, which is now stagnating to the point that factories and stores have to close.

David Thompson Tourism Council, Tony Maxwell

The existing partnership between Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation and the private sector (the Alberta Tourist Zones) must be expanded and improved. While much of this process is taking place right now, both partners must ensure that this process be allowed to continue and grow.

Cooperation with the Tourist Zones is essential. Representing, as they do, thousands of tourism related businesses and with many Zones having excellent administrative organizations already in place, it make good sense to assist them to achieve financial self-sufficiency by encouraging communities, through Tourism Action Committees, to work with, and through, their Zone organizations.

The development of a tourist industry based on professional service and genuine hospitality to visitors is absolutely essential. Tourist Zones, the private sector and the general public need to be encouraged to recognize and support the concepts of hospitality and good service and the vital role they will play in the future expansion of our tourist industry.

Town of Gibbons, Maisie Metrunec, Town Manager

No more additional taxes can be placed on Albertans. Reduction can take place within government administration expenditures.

The proper literary and mathematics skills are no longer being taught at the primary level. We must standardize education in Alberta.

Town of Morinville — Economic Development Board

Spending on economic diversification: Additional dollars should be spent on securing economic diversification and continued economic growth. However, these additional dollars should not come from reduced spending in education, hospitals, healthcare or other social programs but rather from more efficient government operations.

Environmental protection: Protecting the environment is not only a populist movement but one which the Alberta government should embrace as a cornerstone of our new economic development strategy. The full development of our tourism potential will only be realized with an active program and attitude to keep Alberta green.

Education, training and skills upgrading: The responsibility for training and skills upgrading is a blended role. The provincial government should establish the standards for education, determine the key improvement areas and support private industry incentives for workers' training.

Regional and community development: The provincial government should get out of industry attraction programs aimed at providing financial incentives to companies considering locations in Alberta other than major cities. These activities have proven to be largely ineffective with companies eventually relocating or closing. Few permanent jobs have been achieved and the right mix of jobs has failed to materialize from the large investment of tax dollars.

The provincial government's role is to maintain a strong provincial infrastructure and allow individual municipalities/regions to work at developing their own potential from within. Some rural centres will decline if they are not part of viable economic regions in the province. Financial assistance available to all municipalities to attract new investment and economic development would be welcomed.

Town of Slave Lake

Vision statement: The purpose of economic development should have more to do with providing self-fulfilment for every citizen than supporting government's people-service programs. In business, and through government programs, we must foster among Albertans young and old a personal commitment to quality work standards and effort.

Role of government: In the area of diversification/job creation, government should provide a competitive tax and investment climate, have solid employ-

ment-related education, and work with business/educators/employees, etc. to focus on developing specific economic areas. We see value-added services and products as our best opportunities. In education/human resource development, government should take a leadership role, working with employers to promote achievement-based, lifelong learning.

Regional and community development: The government needs to support community initiative in line with the LDI (Local Development Initiative) final report and recommendations. Communities need access to information and creative frameworks to assist in financing sustainable new small business ventures.

Trinity Ventures Ltd., Dale Morice

At present the Alberta government continues, through the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, to support and initiate administrative barriers which have the stated objective of protecting the public but, in most cases, protect vested interests and restrict trade.

Relatively minor changes in the Securities Act would cure the problem. I would like to suggest the following changes which involve no risks to the government while encouraging capital formation and leaving the public better protected than they are now.

- Eliminate the one-year hold period completely except for control persons (the period could be 90 days). Originally designed to prevent unscrupulous promoters from buying cheap stock and immediately reselling it into the marketplace, this practice has never worked because investors forced into hold periods also demand big discounts, as do stock brokers. Since its inception, many disclosure, insider trading, and stock exchange pricing rules have been initiated which more than cover the original problem.
- Introduce legislation requiring intermediaries to release the names of shareholders in the public company annually to the public company. (The public interest is best served when the company knows who its shareholders are.)
- Introduce share-for-debt legislation similar to that of British Columbia.

Although these changes are relatively minor in the overall scheme of things, they would result in a drastic increase in the success rate of junior companies. That spells more jobs for Albertans at no cost to government.

Turner-Gyorgy, Robyn

I feel that one of the most serious problems facing this country is the lack of a national strategy concerning Canadian economic development. The solution is to establish such a strategy by determining a general mandate, mission and vision for this country through a consensus of all provinces and territories. What is needed is one province — Alberta — to initiate this proposal and request that the definition and implementation of a Canadian national strategy be on the agenda at a First Ministers meeting.

Canada also lacks a national strategy concerning education. I propose that a series of federal education packages or components be designed (through provincial consultation) and delivered through the provincial boards of education. These should include such topics of national influence and concern as Canadian history, economics, citizenship and government as well as international affairs.

To encourage national unity, a national unity tax credit is proposed. As tourism touches many areas such as culture, recreation, and education, all of these fields could be utilized to encourage Canadians to visit as much of their country as possible. As a bonus for making the effort to understand and experience the various facets of Canada, the Canadian tourist would be eligible for the national unity tax credit to offset costs involved in the trip.

University of Alberta — Faculty of Engineering

Only with highly trained engineers will Alberta's industries maintain and strengthen their competitive position in the global marketplace.

Vision: In order for Alberta to meet the world's challenge in competitiveness, plans must be based on the principle of comparative excellence. That is, we must recognize our strengths and build on them to perform them better than anyone in the world. Our priority must be the creation of new wealth through the economic application of advanced technology, an attractive tax structure, and an educated workforce. R&D must be seen by industry as a positive investment, not a cost of operation.

Educational Infrastructure: The quality of high school graduates entering engineering schools needs to be improved. It is now widely recognized that Canada has an expensive educational system and is not getting sufficient value from it. Young people must be convinced that successful, vibrant careers in technology are a real and exciting option in Alberta.

New targets related to teacher qualifications, the reward system for teachers, curriculum content in science and technology, work load and quality control should be established, monitored and made public. Additional support for curriculum development, instructional equipment and applied research infrastructure is highly desirable.

Alberta Institute for Advanced Technology: The development of stronger and more responsive engineering schools in Alberta would be assisted by the formation of the Alberta Institute for Advanced Technology. This would be an institute without walls, composed of the faculties of engineering at the Universities of Alberta and Calgary, the Alberta Research Council, a consortium of Alberta-based industries and other university technologically oriented units. It would identify future needs in technological education, gather and transfer information, facilitate networks, promote industry/university cooperation, and stimulate career-long education for the engineering workforce.

University Technologies International Inc.

The Toward 2000 Together documents outline goals and policies, not tactics for achievement. To achieve any such vision, you will need to mobilize those who will be impacted in the first decade of the next century. When you hold your conference and hearings, you must make sure that 50% of those participants are no older than 25-30 years.

Valdvogl, L. R.

Labour should be made financially liable for any damage they cause by strikes. On the other side, management should have a limit on their often exorbitant salaries, otherwise how can they justify a cheque equalling wages of a large portion of other employees.

Financial support by governments for diverse industries has to be also based on assured sales of the product, not just wishful thinking.

Walker, Philip

Government must take a more aggressive role in conjunction with industry and labour together. As the report notes, Alberta has an adversarial labour-business climate. Government has played a legislative role and, to some extent, a moderator's role, but in essence no significant change has occurred in the industry-labour climate.

Government must use its fiscal support, legislative initiatives and persuasion to bring industry and labour together in a better working relationship than that which now exists.

Westcastle Development Authority, Don Haavardsrud

Alberta's future economic prosperity will depend upon its ability to keep its really bright and capable people and to attract that type of person to the province.

It is important, economically and socially, for rural communities to be supported by governments when they bring forward initiatives that will help strengthen their viability. Projects that will benefit the economies of rural communities or make them more interesting and attractive places to live, should receive serious government attention and support.

Western Centre for Economic Research, University of Alberta

The following excerpts are from a summary of comments by a panel of academic staff in the departments of Economics, Rural Economy and the Faculty of Business, University of Alberta.

The economy: How to introduce greater stability into the Alberta economy is difficult since the key sectors of our economy are subject not only to OPEC decisions, Middle East politics, trade subsidy wars, the effect of climate conditions on farm output, and other shocks, but also to national and indeed international cyclical fluctuations in output prices and interest rates.

The budget: The current deficit reduction program of the Alberta government represents a need to correct for past excesses or unrealized expectations. But the continued portrayal of balanced budgets as the hallmark of good economic management, when the tax base is unstable because of its heavy dependence on royalties from resource extraction, effectively undermines the credibility of the government. In looking toward the millennium, what is desperately called for are thorough, impartial studies to identify for Alberta alternative tax structures that yield more stable revenue flows.

Human resources: The most important strategic asset in any region is its human resources. At the present time, there is enough for the Alberta government to do in this conventional sphere of public responsibility, where it is fully accepted that the private sector does not perform efficiently or cannot accomplish agreed social objectives.

Research and development: The Alberta government should continue and strengthen its commitment to research and development. These expenditures are a down payment on the growth and diversification of the economy, not an item to be expensed.

Community and regional development: The policies proposed for agriculture and the rural economy require much more thought and precision. They appear to be premised on intensive government assistance. This approach sets community against community and perpetuates the dependence of farms and rural places on government handouts.

Wild Rose Foundation

The volunteer and community service organization sector feels it has an important part to play in determining good corporate climates and good corporate citizenship.

Without the partnership of government, business and our volunteer sector in the year 2000, we may fall short of our objectives because of dismissing our social conscience. Volunteerism will help shape Alberta's future, economically, socially, physically and emotionally.

Hopefully some element of the economic strategy will reflect the volunteer sector's impact on Alberta's economic outlook for the next decade.

World Trade Centre Edmonton

Albertans must recognize that our current level of success has been to a large extent a result of our historical ability to trade internationally, whether it is in oil and gas, agriculture, forestry or tourism. The Centre feels that in order to

achieve their defined objective for Alberta, a strategy must be implemented that will allow Albertans to remain competitive within these rapidly changing international markets.

Alberta must build upon its natural strengths. This means continued commitment to agriculture, oil and gas, petrochemicals, tourism, forestry, education, telecommunications, environmental protection and education. In each of these areas there is opportunity to develop further processes/value-added products that will allow Albertans to develop, package and market an end product.

Technological innovation resulting from the application of current know-how drives productivity, diversification and ultimately competitiveness. Technological innovation requires a suitable business environment in which to operate. Such an environment is created by an emphasis on research and development, education and ongoing training, especially where this is industry specific, and by suitable government policies and regulatory frameworks.

With respect to our ability to compete in international markets, teamwork is a vital element. The participants in the international trade community, namely business, labour, government and non-government organizations, must develop a new attitude of cooperation. They must work together with a coordinated game plan towards common objectives.

The primary role of the provincial government is as a facilitator in providing an attractive, inviting business climate. This means that the provincial government must provide a supportive policy and regulatory framework to business. This would include relatively low taxes at the personal, corporate and property levels, policies that foster the availability of a skilled workforce, limited bureaucratic processes, and sound, reasoned environmental policies.

The economic development leverage of having two world-class univer18sities (the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary) should be stressed. Both internationally recognized, full-fledged research universities, they contribute to the economic wealth of Alberta, to the technological and human resource capabilities of the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, and beyond to the world.

Appendix A

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